THE PRINCIPLES OF NATURAL AND REVEALED RELIGION

OCCASIONALLY OPENED AND EXPLAINED;

IN A

A Course of SERMONS

Preached before the

HONOURABLE SOCIETY OF LINCOLN'S INN.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOLUME THE SECOND.

By the Rev. Mr. WARBURTON,
Preacher to the SOCIETY.

LONDON,
Printed for J. and P. KNAPTON in *Ludgate-ſtreet*.
MDCCLIV.

CONTENTS.

SER-

SER-

APPENDIX.

SER-

SERMON IX[a].

The Edification of Goſpel righteouſneſs.

2 PETER, Chap. i.

5. *Giving all Diligence, add to your Faith, Virtue; and to Virtue, Knowledge;*
6. *And to Knowledge, Temperance; and to Temperance, Patience; and to Patience, Godlineſs;*
7. *And to Godlineſs, Brotherly-kindneſs; and to Brotherly-kindneſs, Charity.*

THE holy Apoſtle beginning his farewel epiſtle to the Churches with a commendation of their FAITH, takes occaſion from thence to inſtruct them in the nature of that CHRI- SERM. IX.

[a] *N. B.* This Diſcourſe was printed and publiſhed while the Rebel Army was in England, in the latter end of the year 1745.

SERM. IX. STIAN EDIFICATION which they were to raiſe on it; and, as his laſt *labour of love*, brings together, and lays in, all the various materials proper for ſo great a work.

But we ſhall have a very wrong, and much too low, conception of our Apoſtle's ſkill, if we conſider theſe but as materials rudely thrown together without art or choice; and ſtanding in need of other hands to range them in that architectonic order wherein they are to be employed. For on a careful ſurvey of his plan it will be found, that no other than that Spirit which directed the workmen of the old tabernacle could give ſo artful a diſpoſition to the materials of this new *building not made with hands, whoſe builder and maker is God*[b].

He hath marked out the Foundation, he hath fixed the Baſis, proportioned the Members, adorned the Superſtructure, and crowned the Whole with the richeſt of materials. And all this with ſuch juſtice of ſcience, ſublimity of thought, and force of genius, that every foregoing Virtue gives

[b] 2 Cor. v. 1. Heb. xi. 10.

STA-

STABILITY to the following; and every following imparts PERFECTION to that which went before: Where the three Orders of this heavenly architecture, the HUMAN, the DIVINE, and SOCIAL Virtues, are ſo maſterly diſpoſed, that the *human* and *ſocial* have their proper ſtrengths and graces heightened and ſupported by the common connection of the *divine*: Where every thing, in ſhort, concurs, in its proper ſtation, *for the perfecting of the Saints, for the edifying of the Body of Chriſt*[c].

SERM. IX.

In conformity to the Maſters of Science, who deliver it to their diſciples as a firſt principle, that no conſiderable advancement is to be expected without much pains and labour, our holy artiſt introduceth his rules with this preliminary precept, —GIVING ALL DILIGENCE. And if this be neceſſary in civil matters, where nothing oppoſeth the progreſs to perfection but *the length of art and ſhortneſs of life*; with how great reaſon are we here enjoined *diligence*, where, beſides thoſe diſcouragements, we have numerous enemies within us under the diſguiſe of friends, the confederated

[c] Eph. iv. 12.

SERM. IX. Paſſions, to retard our progreſs; and devils, and evil men without, to ſtop us as we preſs forward in the career of virtue?

But the neceſſity of this *diligence* will be fully ſeen in the ſequel of our diſcourſe; where we explain the care and circumſpection required in the cultivation of every chriſtian Virtue, here recommended, to prevent its languiſhing by defect, or luxuriating by exceſs.

St. PETER, *as a wiſe maſter-builder* [d], chuſeth for his foundation that ROCK on which our Lord had promiſed him to *build the Church*;

Add to your FAITH —

as directed by the ſame divine Spirit with his fellow-labourer St. PAUL, who bids *every man take heed how he buildeth; for other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is* JESUS CHRIST [e].

But the ſimplicity and clearneſs of the doctrine of *Faith* could not ſecure it, even in the apoſtolic times, from being perverted to countenance the moſt fatal error concerning its nature and efficacy; while it

[d] 1 Cor. iii. 10. [e] Id. ib. 11.

was

was miſtaken to be *alone* ſufficient to make SERM. man acceptable to his maker, and, *without* IX. *good works*, to entitle him to the rewards of the Goſpel-covenant. To explain the original cauſes of this error, and to ſhew how the perfect novelty of the doctrine of Faith---the illuſtrious marks of that Spirit, which then accompanied the profeſſion of the Faith,---and the method the holy Spirit directed the Apoſtles to purſue in the propagation of the Goſpel---to ſhew, I ſay, how all theſe accidentally contributed to ſupport this error, is beſide the bounds and purpoſe of the preſent diſcourſe.

It ſhall ſuffice to obſerve, that this dangerous extravagance, which hath continued more or leſs, to infect all ages of the Chriſtian Church, ſpread immediately ſo ſwift and wide, upon the wings of that divine truth, that a *man is juſtified by Faith without the deeds of the law* [f], that the apoſtolic writers found it neceſſary to give it a frequent and formal confutation. And on this account, St. Peter's firſt precept enjoins us to add or build *Virtue* upon *Faith.*

[f] Rom. iii. 28.

SERM. IX.

Add to your Faith, VIRTUE[s].

From henceforth, *Faith*, which, while it was ſingle and ſolitary, remained *dead*, as the ſacred writers expreſs it, being thus *cloathed upon* by virtue, becomes alive and vigorous, and productive of all the fruits of grace and immortality.

A reciprocal advantage *Virtue*, thus erected, receives from *Faith*: for we ſhall find theſe advantages to be, all the way, reciprocal. The weakneſs of unguided Reaſon, and the violence of ill-balanced Paſſions, had reduced MORAL VIRTUE, both in principle and practice, to ſo ſhadowy and precarious an exiſtence, that the Wiſeſt

[s] I underſtand the word ἀρετὴν, in this place, in its common acceptation as it is uſed by moral writers. But Grotius ſays, Vox ἀρετῆς non poteſt hic ita generaliter ſumi ut Phil. iv. 8. & apud Philoſophos. It is fit, we hear his reaſon, that the reader may judge between us. Sequuntur enim multa virtutum nomina, quare ἀρετὴν hic recte puto poſſe accipi fortitudinem in fide. He owns—Eſt in hoc periodo egregia gradatio. I think I have ſhewn there is ſuch a gradation; but its beauty and correctneſs depend on ἀρετὴν's being taken *generaliter, ut Phil. iv. 8. & apud Philoſophos.*

in

in the pagan world could not forbear la- SERM.
menting its helpleſs condition; and own- IX.
ing that nothing but a Revelation from Heaven could realize and ſupport it.

They miſtook the true foundation of Morality; Some placing it in the native excellence of virtue, others in the exterior benefits, of which it is productive. They were left deſtitute, and expoſed to the free rage of ungoverned paſſions, without aid, and with uncertain proſpect of reward.

But it was the *Diſpenſation of Faith*, which taught us that the true foundation of Morality was compliance to the will of our Creator and ſovereign Lord. It was *Faith* which enabled us to ſurmount all the oppoſition of the appetites, by holding out to us an infinite reward; and which the aſſiſtance of the holy Spirit hath placed within our reach. Thus, to uſe the words of the apoſtle Jude, *building up ourſelves on our moſt holy* FAITH, *praying in the Holy Ghoſt, keeping ourſelves in the love of God, we may look for the mercy of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt unto eternal life*[b].

[b] Ver. 20—21.

SERM. IX.

But though *Virtue* be here enjoined, and in all the preaching of our bleſſed Saviour, and in all the writings of his Apoſtles, inceſſantly repeated and inforced; yet, if we expect to find in them any regular or methodic body of Morality, we ſhall be much miſtaken. With reſpect to this, the New Teſtament, all along, refers us to another Guide. For God having before revealed the whole doctrine of Morality by the RELIGION OF NATURE, and none of God's diſpenſations contradicting another, it was enough for the firſt teachers of Chriſtianity, when they preached up *Virtue*, to refer their followers for particulars, to what Natural Religion taught concerning it.

This being ſo, and that the great Pandect of the LAW OF NATURE is to be ſearched and ſtudied, in order to attain a perfect knowledge of moral duty, there is need of much pains and exerciſe of mind to learn that *Virtue* we are here enjoined to build upon *Faith*. For though Nature hath ſtamped ſo ſtrongly the firſt principles of moral duty in the breaſts of all men, that even a kind of friendly inſtinct will not

not ſuffer us to be totally ignorant of them; yet the numerous deductions from thoſe firſt principles, of what is fit and right, in every circumſtance of life, being to be collected by the ſetting together, comparing, and ſorting our ideas, through all the various combinations of moral complexities, it requires, even with the aſſiſtance of Holy Writ, much reflection and habitude; and without that aſſiſtance, is a taſk utterly unſurmountable, as the experience of all ages hath fully ſhewn. SERM. IX.

Scripture then conſtantly referring to the Law of Nature, what can reſult from the ſtudy of Scripture, by one ignorant of that Law, but doubt and uncertainty, if modeſt; and if vain and preſuming, and at the ſame time (which hath too often happened) a teacher of others by profeſſion, what but miſtakes and errors, the fatal errors of Superſtition and Fanaticiſm? For doubtleſs to an ignorance of natural Religion muſt be aſcribed thoſe extravagancies to which ſo many Sects and Parties have, in their ſeveral turns, been obnoxious.

But much of this miſchief had been avoided, had men duly attended to the words

SERM. IX. words of our Apoſtle: who, with this deſign, gave us the next precept of my text. *Add*, ſays he,

to Virtue, KNOWLEDGE;

or that wiſdom which is the reſult of the ſtudy of Nature in the purſuit of Truth.

I.

And that you may ſee with how prophetic, as well as juſt, a ſpirit St. *Peter* was here directed, I ſhall ſtop a moment to hold you out a picture of *Virtue* unattended with that *Knowledge*; copied from no obſcure or diſgraced originals; but from ſuch whoſe lives are preached up for examples, and their deaths commemorated with divine honours; ſuch as have ſhrines and altars dedicated to their worſhip; and vows and petitions offered up to their divinity; in one word, POPISH SAINTS.

To underſtand this matter truly, We muſt conſider, that *Virtue* conſiſts in acting agreeably to thoſe relations, in which we ſtand to our common Humanity, our Fellow-creatures, and our Creator. For as RELIGION, in the largeſt ſenſe of the word,

includes the duty we owe ourſelf and neigh- SERM.
bour; ſo MORALITY, in its larger ſenſe, IX.
includes the obſervance of that relation we
ſtand in towards God. And when the practice reſpects man, it is called VIRTUE; when it reſpects God, it is PIETY.

Theſe relations are commonly diſtinguiſhed into the *human*, the *ſocial*, and the *divine* virtues: The end and deſign of all which is to perfect man's nature,

1. By reſtraining, regulating, and directing the private and ſelfiſh appetites, *according to the dictates of reaſon.*

2. By cultivating, improving, and enlarging the ſocial paſſions and affections, and employing them in the ſervice of our Species, *according to the dictates of charity.*

3. By exerciſing our underſtandings in the contemplation of the firſt Cauſe, and by owning our relation to him in ſuitable acts of rational worſhip, in order to unite us to our ſupreme Good, *according to the dictates of grace.*

Now when, in the Church of Rome, *Knowledge* came to be eſteemed of no uſe to improve or direct *Virtue*; but that *Ignorance* was thought as well the mother of

all

SERM. IX. all other virtues, as *of Devotion:* When the *Law of Nature* came to be ſhunned as a dangerous and fallacious guide; and *Faith*, traditional, not ſcriptural, had uſurped its province of interpreting *Goſpel-righteouſneſs*; then it was, that theſe bright examples of a new kind of virtue appeared amongſt them, in a barbarous rabble of Saints; who under the common name of RELIGIOUS, and on pretence of a more ſublime and elevated virtue, than natural Religion taught, ran into the moſt horrid exceſſes of Fanaticiſm and Superſtition. For,

1. Inſtead of REGULATING the ſelfiſh appetites, they laboured all they could to eradicate and deſtroy them, as things, even in their nature, vicious; as the graceleſs furniture of *the old man with his affections and luſts.* All was diſmal and dark about them: inordinate watchings, excruciating diſciplines, attenuating labours: Theſe miſeries, ſtill further aggravated by hunger, thirſt, and nakedneſs, were the beſt means theſe poor miſtaken followers of *him*, who ſaid *his yoke was eaſy and his burthen light*, could think of to regulate the ſelfiſh paſſions.

ſions. 'Till the body, deprived of every kind of good, which the gracious hand of Providence hath ſo largely poured out for the ſolace of its creatures, gave way, and yielded to the fury of this fanatic penitence: While he was eſteemed the greateſt *Saint* who was the moſt expeditious *Suicide*. SERM. IX.

2. Inſtead of improving and ENLARGING the ſocial affections, theſe Saints fled into caves and deſerts, or ſhut themſelves up for life in the duſt and ſilence of a cloiſter. Where, to unfit themſelves for ſerving their friends and families, they renounced their poſſeſſions, to give to *pious uſes*; that is, to ſupport the ſloth of lazy Mendicants, or the luxury of debauched Churchmen: To unfit themſelves for ſubmiſſion to the Civil magiſtrate, they entered into treaſonable engagements of unlimited obedience to their ſpiritual ſuperiors: To unfit themſelves for ſerving their country or mankind, they took vows of voluntary poverty, and renounced all ſecular employments: And laſtly, as much as in them lay, to make war againſt their very Species, they unnaturally devoted themſelves to a ſingle life, in blaſ-

SERM. IX. blaſphemous oppoſition to that firſt great command and bleſſing, *increaſe and multiply.*

3. Laſtly, inſtead of USING REASON in the offices of devotion, to attain the ſupreme Good, an union with the Deity; By crediting the *Imagination*, they have often thrown themſelves, with extatic tranſports, into the arms of the Demon. While, in the place of internal acts of ſober meditation, nothing was ſeen but viſionary raptures, and transfigurations; nothing heard but predictions, prophecies, and revelations: In the place of external acts of rational worſhip, they celebrated the holy offices with gay and childiſh ornaments, with barbarous and ſuperſtitious rites, and with baſe and ſervile proſtrations. And the favourite objects of their worſhip were in all reſpects agreeable to the form; either the idolatrous adoration of a conſecrated wafer, or of thoſe yet leſs ſubſtantial divinities, which have their exiſtence only in a lying legend.

You have here a faithful picture of popiſh *Virtue* ſtript of *Knowledge*. From whence you may collect how miſerable a creature

creature man grows, when he throws aſide his *Reaſon*, the firſt kind gift of Heaven, in order to follow the falſe lights, which cuſtom, fancy, or the paſſions have ſtuck up in his breaſt; and how equally miſerable that Society muſt be, which ſupports a Religion, where IGNORANCE hath diveſted *Virtue* of all its charms, poiſoned all its health, and made it as deſtructive to Communities, as barefaced open vice. SERM. IX.

Here, you have been ſhewn, in a terrible example, the miſchief done by *Ignorance* to *Virtue*; of how much ſervice *Knowledge* is to it, you may collect for yourſelves.

I now proceed to ſhew the reciprocal ſervice *Virtue* does to *Knowledge*. *Knowledge* is the perception and attainment of TRUTH; and *uſeful Knowledge* the perception and attainment of thoſe truths, which tend to the perfecting of our nature. But the carnal paſſions, operating averſely to ſuch truths, cloud and darken the underſtanding, ſo as to miſlead us even in thoſe of the moſt eaſy diſcovery, and of the higheſt importance. Again, to acquire a competent ſhare of *Knowledge* we muſt, as I have ſaid, *give all diligence* in the purſuit of truth,

SERM. IX. truth, ſo as to trace her throughout her hidden receſſes: But it is only a love for the object, which can heartily engage us in the purſuit: And this can ariſe from nothing but the beauty of it. Now while *Vice* uſurps the heart, *Truth*, her mortal enemy, will be a neglected Gueſt. But when *Virtue* has aſſumed her ſeat, the paſſion for Truth will revive. For *Truth* and *Virtue* are twin-born ſiſters; and, with only a name of diſtinction, participate of one common nature; *Truth* being ſpeculative *Virtue*, and *Virtue* only practical *Truth*. And now the underſtanding makes a free progreſs in knowledge, as having no headſtrong appetites to miſlead it, nor earthly paſſions to damp its affection.

From henceforth, the only danger is from the quarter oppoſite: Leſt the mind's ardent love of truth ſhould engage it in abſtractions; and carry it beyond the limits of thoſe truths, which are given us for our contemplation here.

In order to apprehend this danger, we are to underſtand, that, of the immenſe intellectual ſyſtem, an extremely ſmall portion

tion only lies really within our reach; the infinitely larger part reſiding near the ſource of Light itſelf; whoſe effulgence becomes darkneſs to the dazzled view of the impotent Intruder. SERM. IX.

The reaſon why ſo much is kept out of ſight, and ſet above the reach of man's comprehenſion, who by the unwearied vigour of his faculties ſeems naturally capable of a much wider graſp, appears to be this, Leſt, in our earthly condition, the mind ſhould become diſtracted by too great variety of ideas; or that it ſhould make a wrong choice; and purſue truths of leſs preſent importance too far, to the neglect of thoſe more neceſſary for it's improvement, in this our probationary condition.

This reaſon is much ſupported by obſerving, that in the enlightened part of the intellectual world, nay even in thoſe cleareſt and brighteſt portions of it, where full ſcience is to be had, ſpeculations, puſhed beyond a certain point, (that point where Uſe is reaſonably ſuppoſed to end, and mere Curioſity to begin) bring our concluſions to obſcurity, extravagance, and contradiction.

SERM. IX.

The not attending to this ſeems to have been the very thing, which hath given birth, and ſo long continuance, to SCEPTICISM. For men ſeeing this to be the iſſue of the cleareſt principles, when purſued to an intemperate length, concluded, againſt their ſenſes, that what ended in darkneſs had never really begun in light. Reaſon indeed convinced them that ſo perverſe a progreſs was not the NATURAL CONDITION of things; but they would not ſuffer experience to teach them, that it was the ARBITRARY DECREE of infinite wiſdom and mercy, which impoſed this barrier to the extravagances of its giddy, lawleſs creature.

But however this may be, certain it is, that men, raiſed and heated by an over-fond paſſion for knowledge, have been always apt to run into the boundleſs regions of chimera's. Where, though loſt and bewildered, yet, if of warm imaginations, and inflamed with the ambition of Inventors, they have taken more delight in thoſe obſcure and ſhadowy paths, than any ſober follower of truth, within the limits of open day and nature.

Now

Now theſe follies, ſo taking in themſelves, and ſo miſchievous in their conſequences, proceeding from a want of modeſty, and due conſciouſneſs of the narrow limits of the human underſtanding, St. Peter, in his next precept, with admirable ſkill, reſtrains. *Add*, ſays he, SERM. IX.

to Knowledge, TEMPERANCE [i];

that is, *ſobriety*, *moderation*, *continence*, in the purſuit of truth. For as *Virtue*, without *Knowledge*, falls into all kind of FANATICISM in practice; ſo *Knowledge*, with-

[i] Ἐγκράτεια ſignifies moderation, or a temperate uſe of things in general. To denote the ſpecies, the Ancients ſaid, ἐγκρατὴς ἀφροδισίων, — γαστρὸς ἐγκρής, — ἐγκρὴς ὕπνου, θυμοῦ, οἴνου. When the ſpecies is not thus deſigned, we have no way of determining the ſenſe of ſo generical a word, but the context. Cic. uſes *temperantia* in the ſenſe ἐγκράτεια is here explained.— Qui autem, ſi maxime hoc placeat, *moderatius* tamen id volunt fieri, difficilem quandam TEMPERANTIAM poſtulant in eo, quod ſemel admiſſum coerceri reprimique non poteſt: ut propemodum juſtioribus utamur illis, qui omnino avocent a Philoſophiâ quam iis qui rebus infinitis *modum* conſtituant: in reque eo meliore quo major ſit, *mediocritatem* deſiderent — tamen nec *modus* eſt ullus *inveſtigandi veri*.—De Fin. l. i. c. 1.

SERM. IX. out *Temperance*, leads to all kind of HERESY in opinion. St. Paul obſerved, even in his time, the ſeeds of *intemperate* knowledge begin to ſpring up and ſpread amongſt his converts; and therefore cautions them againſt *vain philoſophy and a knowledge that puffeth up*[k]. But this ſo deformed and laid waſte the Chriſtian Church in after-times, that the *new earth* ſeemed, for many ages, to be under a *ſecond curſe* of *bringing forth nothing but thorns and thiſtles*; ſo much more ſevere than the *firſt*, that theſe delicacies were not to be produced without much labour, and *ſweat of the brow*.

II.

Here again the ROMAN CHURCH affords us a ſad example of the miſchiefs of *intemperate knowledge:* For though, as was obſerved before, there was great ſcarcity of *true knowledge* to direct their *Virtue*, they abounded in *falſe knowledge* to corrupt their *Faith:* Though they refuſed to make the RELIGION OF NATURE the interpreter of

[k] Col. ii. 8.—1 Cor. viii. 1.

Goſpel-

Goſpel-righteouſneſs, they ſanctified the VAIN PHILOSOPHY OF THE GREEKS[1] to explain *juſtifying Faith.* SERM. IX.

We have ſeen what ſort of SAINTS the Church of Rome adores: Let us now ſee what kind of DOCTORS ſhe builds her faith upon. As their DEVOUT retired to their Cloiſters to deform *Virtue*, ſo their LEARNED aſſembled in their Schools to corrupt *Faith.* Where, miſtaking Theology, which is a ſcience of practice, for a ſcience of ſpeculation, *Knowledge*, which is only the means, they took to be the END of Religion; and as that, which is the end of any thing, cannot be too much cultivated, they purſued *Knowledge* with ſuch *intemperate* rage, that, as if Religion was only a a trial of ſkill, and the rewards of it to be adjudged to the beſt diſputant, they ſpent their whole lives in agitating and ſubtilizing queſtions of faith: Abundantly happy if with all their toil they could at length obtain the never-fading titles of *Doctors profound, irrefragable, ſubtil*, and *ſeraphic.* Theſe, under the reverend name of SCHOOL-

[1] The philoſophy of Ariſtotle being the foundation of School Divinity.

SERM. IX. MEN, long monopoliſed the manufactury of Faith; and wove their cobwebs thin and dark for the hangings of the Sanctuary.

To ſuch then, you will eaſily believe, the APOSTLE'S CREED ſoon became too plain and ſimple. They wanted one that would afford eternal matter for diſpute and wrangle. So, from the article of *Mary the* VIRGIN, they invented one of *Mary the* GODDESS: From the article of *Chriſt once offered on the croſs for our redemption*, they ſpun out a *daily Sacrifice*; and the horrid idea of a *Tranſubſtantion:* From *his deſcent into Hell* they deduced the fable of *Purgatory:* From *belief in the holy Catholic Church*, the blaſphemous tenet of the *Pope's infallibility:* From the *communion of Saints*, the idolatrous *worſhip of dead men:* And from the *forgiveneſs of ſins*, the gainful trade of *auricular confeſſion, and human abſolution.*

But none of theſe ſtrange doctrines being to be found in *Scripture*, they were forced to call in the aid of TRADITION to ſtrengthen the feeble Powers of SCHOOL-SUBTILTY. And Tradition drawing after it a thouſand other beggarly errors, which

which were all now to be ſupported; this gave riſe to an after-birth of Hereſies, and freſh employment for the foſter-fathers *of the Schools*. So that at length, the true foundation, the ſimple faith in JESUS THE MESSIAH was loſt and forgotten; and lay for many ages buried under two deformed heaps of rubbiſh, SCHOOL-DIVINITY and TRADITION. Over each of which, like the Ædiles in *ancient Rome*, a venerable Magiſtrate preſided, *That* called the *Maſter of the Sums*, and *This*, of *the Sentences*[m]. SERM. IX.

At laſt, in God's good time, this precept of *adding temperance to knowledge* began to be attended to; And the truth, which flamed out from the well-conducted labours of ſuch, ſoon burnt up and conſumed this precious ſuperſtructure of *wood, hay, and ſtubble*. When the true Faith, like *oft-tried ſilver*, appeared again in its native purity and candour. In this condition we received it from our fathers. So ſacred a depoſite let us religiouſly preſerve, and with the ſame pious care tranſmit to our poſterity: Having always in mind that

[m] Thomas Aquinas, and Peter Lombart.

SERM. IX. *we are built upon the foundation of the Apoſtles and Prophets* (not the Maſters of the *Sums* and *Sentences*) *Jeſus Chriſt himſelf being the chief corner-ſtone*[n].

The avoiding theſe evils therefore, is the advantage which *Knowledge* receives from *Temperance*. A reciprocal advantage *Temperance* receives from *Knowledge*: For *Temperance* being nothing but the withdrawing from all viſionary purſuits, and abſtaining from all raſh judgment, out of a ſenſe and conviction of the weakneſs of human underſtanding, was *it* not founded upon *Knowledge*, it would be in danger of degenerating into a ſlothful Scepticiſm, a total uncertainty of all things, from a ſuperficial examination of the moſt obvious; a fatal aptitude in concluding that truth was not to be found, from being too ſoon weary of the ſearch. A condition which, we experience, hath befallen, and muſt, unavoidably, befall thoſe, whoſe *Temperance* is not founded on *Knowledge*. But being thus ſecured, *Temperance* preſerves a vigorous, yet a ſober courſe: For

[n] Epheſ. ii. 20.

the

the regular reſtraint which it impoſeth on the mind doth not hinder us from the moſt active exerciſe of our faculties, but only confines it to objects fitted for our contemplation. SERM. IX.

We have obſerved, that the reaſonableneſs of the practice of *Temperance* ariſeth from our ſenſe of the weakneſs of human underſtanding. Now this ſenſe ſhould not only diſpoſe us to be moderate in our own opinions, but to be candid and charitable to the opinions of others; and till *Temperance* hath acquired this quality, it is partial and imperfect.

To render it compleat, St. Peter, therefore, in his next precept, injoins us to *add*

to Temperance, PATIENCE °;

that is, *long-ſuffering*, and bearing with the contradiction of Others. This is in-

° The original is ὑπομονή. The reaſon why the Apoſtle uſed this word rather than μακροθυμία, which may ſeem to be the more proper word for the ſenſe I give to *Patience*, appears to me to be this— The Church, at the time of writing this epiſtle, was in a ſubjected and diſtreſſed condition. And ὑπομονὴ is the *Patience* of thoſe in ſubjection, as μακροθυμία is

deed

SERM. IX. deed the natural conſequence of a perfect *Temperance*. For having experienced, in our own caſe, how inſenſibly errors inſinuate themſelves into the mind; how plauſibly they aſſume the air of truth, when called to account; how obſtinately they maintain their ground, when now become ſuſpected; and what labour is required to diſpoſſeſs them, even after they are detected and expoſed; — having experienced, I ſay, all this, we ſhall be well inclined to bear with *Patience* the contradiction of our erring Brother. We ſhall ſtill preſerve the affection we had for him before he went aſtray; and ſhall not ſuffer his being of another Church, or Sect, or Party, or any thing but an *unchriſtian life*, to leſſen that affection; but with *Temperance* and *Patience* wait the ſecond coming of the Meſſiah to *ſeparate the tares from the wheat* [p].

the *Patience* of thoſe in authority. Beſides, ὑπομονὴ in the New Teſtament generally ſignifies a *Patience* attended with hope and expectation of better. And that ſenſe I make to be required here.

[p] Matt. xiii. 30.

III.

III. SERM. IX.

The want of which *virtues*, amongſt thoſe, who yet dare to call themſelves *the followers of the Lamb*, hath brought more deſolation on the Chriſtian Church, than all the perſecutions of pagan Emperors, or the eruptions of northern Barbarians: leſs Pagan, and leſs Barbarian, than the author of the PRINCIPLE OF INTOLERANCE, who pretending to ſit in the Chair of him, who here enjoins us *to add patience to temperance*; and calling himſelf the *Vicar of Chriſt*, hath not been aſhamed to make *him* the pattern of his conduct, who was *an accuſer of his brethren, and a murderer from the beginning*[q].

The Chriſtian Church, in its infancy, breathed nothing but concord, love, and charity. It had *then* a ſpirit as pure, and innocent, as the ſtate of childhood itſelf. The holy brethren were, *in malice, children*; howbeit, in *underſtanding*, that is, in rational faith, in vigorous virtue, and in ſober knowledge, they were *men*. And thus was the *new Jeruſalem built like a city, that is at unity in itſelf*[r]. No diſ-

[q] John viii. 44. [r] Pſal. cxxii. 3.

putes,

SERM. IX. putes, no ſtrife, no emulation, but who ſhould moſt excel in works of charity and piety.

But, alas! this glorious riſing of the Goſpel, which came with *healing in its wings*, and promiſed the arrival of that long-wiſhed-for day of *everlaſting peace*, was of a ſudden overcaſt, and nothing ſucceeded but ſtorms and tempeſts. For our evil Genius, the *Prince of the air*, was early at work to obſcure and deface the promiſed triumphs of the *Sun of righteouſneſs*. Nor was the engine he employed to defeat man's *Reſtoration*, different from that, with which he procured his *Fall:* It was, ſtill, *Knowledge* without its regulator, *Temperance*.

For when now the SCHOOLS, by obtruding on the world a ſyſtem of ſanctified abſurdities under the name of *catholic religion*, had produced ſchiſms and diſſentions; and the CLOISTERS, by perfecting their ſaints in a ſour inhumanity and holy pride, had raiſed a ſpirit impatient of contradiction (and the papal hiſtory informs us, that their learnedſt Doctors were the moſt unintelligible, and their Holieſt ſaints the leaſt forbearing) then

it

it was that their Church, impregnated with theſe miſchiefs, brought forth the Fury, PERSECUTION. SERM. IX.

Of all the *Myſteries of iniquity*, that of perſecution is the ſooneſt learnt, and eaſieſt reduced to practice: On which account it hath had its proficients, that were fit for nothing elſe, in every Sect and Party: But the honour of reducing it to a ſcience, and conducting it on certain principles, is ſolely due to the CHURCH OF ROME. For no ſooner was a people found who refuſed to receive *the mark of the Beaſt*, than aſſiſted by the Schools and Cloiſters, it erected that infernal Butchery, the INQUISITION, the maſter-piece of its *eccleſiaſtical Policy*; which, under the name of an HOLY OFFICE, as directly violates the law of Nature and Nations in the injuſtice of its *proceſs*, as all the precepts of the Goſpel in the inhumanity of its *judgments*.

But (holy Jeſus!) ſhould I relate the tricks, the treacheries, the frauds, the rapines, the delays, the horrors of impriſonment, the tortures of the rack, the bloodſhed, the murders practiſed there, murders committed with ſo exquiſite a malice, that

SERM. IX. *body*, *ſoul*, and *reputation* are intended to fall a ſacrifice at once,—ſhould I but repreſent, I ſay, theſe things to you in their native colours, your juſt indignation would endanger that heaven-born Charity, which it is my aim to recommend to you even here, and here chiefly, where I am pointing out the enormous evils which the excluſion of her bleſſed influence occaſions. And though I have expreſſed myſelf with the free reſentment of a man who regards POPERY, not only as the corruption of true Religion, but as an inſult on the SENSE, and an invaſion of the LIBERTIES of mankind; yet would I carefully endeavour to keep within the bounds of that charity which conſtitutes the character of a miniſter of Chriſt.

I ſhall therefore draw a veil over this unhappy ſcene, which gives ſo deadly a wound to the integrity of the Chriſtian name; and infixes ſo laſting a diſgrace even on our Common nature. Content to have given you one general view of the PAPAL RELIGION, which, under the name of a *Religion*, is indeed no other than an impious *Farce*. I have ſhewn you, in their order,

order, the three acts of which it conſiſts: SERM. The firſt played by their *Saints*, and their IX. ſubject, *fanatic Virtue:* The ſecond by their *Doctors*, and their's, *unintelligible Faith:* The third by their *Prieſts*, and their's, the antichriſtian *diſcipline of racks and gibbets.* I have ſhewn you likewiſe the connection theſe three parts have on one another; and the natural tendency of the two firſt to produce the dreadful *cataſtrophe* of the third. For when Virtue becomes ſtript of humanity, and Faith forſaken of reaſon, charity is ſoon loſt in zeal, and piety changed to perſecution.

Such a view ſhould teach us to ſet a juſt value on our own happy Conſtitution, where *Goſpel-light* and *Civil liberty* go hand in hand. And be You well aſſured that theſe two bleſſings muſt ſtand or fall together: That Civil ſlavery will make room for Popiſh cruelty; and that Popiſh ſuperſtition will ſupport a tyrant in trampling on our laws. For the politician knows that the ſureſt way of fixing ſlavery is to tie it on the conſciences of men: And the prieſt hath experienced, that the mind is never ſo tame and ſervile, ſo ſubmiſs in ſwallow-

ing

SERM. IX. ing contradictions, as when the body is already broken and humbled by the ſtroke of tyranny.

Thus hath the Apoſtle ſhewn us, that the ſecurity againſt the evils of diſſention and intolerance are *Temperance* and *Patience*; which teach us to *feel* our own weakneſs, and to *bear* with that of Others. But here again the infirmity of our Common nature betrays itſelf; and *Temperance* and *Patience*, excellent and divine as they are, become ſubject to the general fate of human virtues, grow degenerate and depraved. Thus, too often, moderation and tolerance ſink into careleſsneſs and indifference, a fatal indifference for all truth, and all religion. That men, and even Churches are but too apt to fall into that remiſs and *lukewarm* ſtate, for which, the holy Spirit denounced ſo ſevere a judgment on the *Laodiceans*[s], we have melancholy proof. Nor is ſuch a degeneracy hard to be conceived. For when the corroſive ferment of bitter Zeal, which deſolates mankind under a pretended concern for the glory of God, has, by the infuſion of the cool and heavenly

[s] Rev. iii. 16.

dew

dew of moderation, been brought to a gentle temperament; the Mind, become tired, and aſhamed of its late tumultuous diſorders, is apt to ſink into the other extreme, of a languid and unactive indifference. I wiſh I had no cauſe to ſay, that this very age and place have ſeen this ſhameful infirmity of our nature exemplified. And whoever reflects upon the indiſcreet zeal which diſturbed the Church in the begining of this century, and on the nature of that *effectual* cure which began to operate, before we reached to the middle of it, will not, if he be ſerious and impartial, accuſe me of an uncandid reflection. But to return. To provide againſt this evil is the deſign of our Apoſtle's next precept, which bids us *add*

SERM. IX.

to Patience, GODLINESS.

And then, (as St. James adviſeth[t]) we *let Patience have her perfect work.* For then, at the ſame time that we preſerve the greateſt moderation towards others, we ſhall keep alive the holy fire of innoxious zeal in ourſelves. For by *Godlineſs* is meant

[t] Ch. i. 4.

SERM. IX. the warm and affectionate diſcharge of all the duties of divine intercourſe, whether in public acts of devotion, or in private ſentiments of meditation.

With exquiſite ſkill likewiſe hath our Apoſtle raiſed this ſecond ORDER of Chriſtian architecture, *godlineſs*, or the *divine virtue*, on the former, namely, the *human*. For, by this means, *godlineſs* cannot degenerate, as it did in the CHURCH of ROME, from not obſerving this direction, either into fanaticiſm, ſuperſtition, or bigotry; but will remain ſober, rational, and truly ſublime.

And yet there is another danger to which it is obnoxious. For by long and intenſe exerciſe in holy offices, the joy and tranſport that elevates the mind, thus filled with its true and proper object, GOD, naturally diſpoſeth us to contemn all inferior things; and from deſpiſing the things, but toooften, to deſpiſe the perſons who delight in them: And by making odious compariſons, like the *Phariſee to the Publican*, to forget our relation, our near relation, both by nature and grace, to the meaneſt of our ſpecies. Hence ariſeth SPIRITUAL PRIDE,

PRIDE, the laſt and moſt fatal enemy to true *Godlineſs*. Now for this, too, the Apoſtle, in his next precept, provides a remedy. *Add*, ſays he, SERM. IX.

to godlineſs, BROTHERLY-KINDNESS.

Thus begins the third, and laſt ORDER of this chriſtian building. And, from this time, *Godlineſs*, placed between, and ſupported, on each hand, by the *human* and *ſocial* virtues, becomes ſtable and permanent. And while it receives this united aid from both, it returns it back again to both.

We have ſhewn the benefits *temperance and patience* receive from *godlineſs*: We are now to ſpeak of that which *brotherly-kindneſs* receives from it.

The moſt beauteous, and elevated branch of *brotherly-kindneſs* is FRIENDSHIP, whoſe natural root and origin is ſimilitude of manners. But *theſe* being as often bad as good, friendſhip becomes as frequently a confederacy in vice, as a community of virtue. So that this adorable virtue, the cordial of private life, and largeſt ſource of public good, by being built on the falſe

SERM. IX.

foundation of *ungodlineſs*, hath often produced all that miſchief to Society it was deſigned by nature, to prevent. But when, as here, it is rightly placed on *godlineſs*, it ſtands ſecure from abuſe, and is enabled to bring forth all its genuine fruits of public beneficence.

Brotherly-kindneſs is now only liable to one diſorder, (for human depravity will ſhew itſelf to the very laſt) and it is this, that *brotherly-kindneſs* being enjoined to be built on *godlineſs*, or Religion, men are yet too apt, like the *Phariſees* of old, to confine their *brotherly-kindneſs* within their own *ſect* or *pale*: While all *without* are treated by them as the wounded traveller by the Prieſt and Levite.

But this narrow and partial benevolence the Apoſtle has effectually removed in the concluding precept of my text. *Add*, ſays he, in the laſt place,

to brotherly-kindneſs, CHARITY;

that is, univerſal love of all mankind. This regulates and perfects all the other virtues; and is, itſelf, in no want of a reformer. All the other virtues, as we have obſerved,

obſerved, degenerate both by defect and exceſs: This is incapable of either. Its nature and eſſence ſecure it from defect; and its fruits and products from exceſs. SERM. IX.

This then is the crown, the keyſtone of this heavenly edifice, this triumphant Arch of immortality; or, as the holy Apoſtle more emphatically calls it, THE BOND OF PERFECTNESS[v]. This, with reſpect to the foregoing Virtues, is like the gilt dome or covering of the imperial Palace. Without which, the ſtrongeſt foundations, the richeſt ornamented walls, the beſt-diſpoſed apartments, become, in a little time, but naked and deformed ruins; open to every ſtorm, and expoſed to all the deſolation of waſting elements.

WITHOUT THIS, if we may believe his fellow-labourer St. PAUL, the reſt of the Chriſtian building hath neither ornament nor uſe. The very FOUNDATION is precarious and unſtable: *Though I have all* FAITH, ſays he, *ſo that I could remove mountains, and have no* CHARITY, *I am nothing.* VIRTUE, likewiſe, without it, is equally unprofitable: *Tho' I give my body to be burnt,*

[v] Col. iii. 14.

SERM. IX. *and have no* CHARITY, *it profiteth me nothing.* KNOWLEDGE likewiſe without it is vain and brutal: *Though I ſpeak with the Tongues of men and of angels, and have all* KNOWLEDGE, *and have not* CHARITY, *I am become as ſounding braſs, or a tinkling cymbal.* Even GODLINESS is unacceptable without it: *Though I have the gift of prophecy, and underſtand all myſteries, and have no* CHARITY, *I am nothing.* Laſtly, BROTHERLY-KINDNESS, when ſeparated from it, goes unrewarded: *Tho' I beſtow all my goods to feed the poor, and have not* CHARITY, *it profiteth me nothing.*

But, IN THIS, as the ſame Apoſtle tells us, are comprized all the efficacies of the foregoing graces: For, like FAITH, he tells us, it *believeth all things*, it *hopeth all things*; like VIRTUE, *it thinketh no evil, doth not behave itſelf unſeemly*; like true KNOWLEDGE, it *vaunteth not itſelf, is not puffed up*; like TEMPERANCE and PATIENCE, *it ſuffereth long, and is kind, is not eaſily provoked, beareth all things, endureth all things*; like GODLINESS, it *rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth*; and

and like BROTHERLY-KINDNESS, it *envieth* SERM. *not, ſeeketh not its own.* IX.

In a word, beginning then with FAITH, and finiſhing with CHARITY, or, as the ſame Apoſtle much better expreſſeth it, FAITH WORKING BY CHARITY [w], we come by juſt degrees to erect, after the divine model here given us, that heavenly edifice of *Chriſtian perfection, Jeſus Chriſt himſelf being the chief corner-ſtone, in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord* [x].

[w] Gal. v. 6. [x] Eph. ii. 20—21.

SERMON X.

The Nature and End of the LORD'S SUPPER.

MATTHEW xxvi. 26, & ſeq.

And as they were eating, Jeſus took bread and bleſſed it, and brake it, and gave it to the diſciples, and ſaid, Take eat; THIS IS MY BODY: *and he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, ſaying, Drink ye all of it, for* THIS IS MY BLOOD *of the new Teſtament, which is ſhed for many for the remiſſion of ſins.*

THE celebration of the LORD'S SUPPER being our conſtant duty, as it is *to ſhew the Lord's death till he come;* SERM. X.

SERM. X. *come*[a]; and likewiſe our greateſt bleſſing, as it is *the communion of the body and blood of Chriſt*[b]; it may not be improper to enquire into it's SPECIFIC NATURE; in order to comprehend both the force of our obligation to frequent the Lord's table, and the value of the benefit in worthy communicating.

The Rites and Ceremonies of the law were TYPICAL. A Type, as I have ſhewn elſewhere[c], aroſe from the ancient mode of converſing by *ſigns:* For, by adding a *moral import* to a ſignificative ſign, the action becomes a TYPE[d]. This ſacred Rite, which (together with *Baptiſm)* was to ſucceed to the whole Jewiſh ritual, is, like that ritual, *Typical* alſo: but with this difference, The Jewiſh Rites were predictive of things *future*; and ſo, obſcure and intricate: this, ſignificative of a thing *paſt*; and ſo, clear and intelligible.

Thus far as to its *form.* Its *ſpecific nature* is our next inquiry. To have an exact idea of this, two things muſt be well conſidered: The ſtate of Religion at the

[a] 1 Cor. xi. 26. [b] 1 Cor. x. 16.
[c] Div. Leg. Book iv. Sect. 4. [d] Ibid.

time of inſtituting this Rite; and the immediate occaſion of it's celebration. SERM. X.

1. In thoſe ages of the world when victims made ſo great a part of the Religion both of Jews and Gentiles, the *ſacrifice* was always followed by a religious feaſting on the thing offered; which was called, the *feaſt upon or after the ſacrifice*; the partakers of which were ſuppoſed to become partakers of the *benefits* of the Sacrifice. Now, from the Goſpel-hiſtory of the inſtitution of the *Lord's ſupper*, and from St. Paul's reaſoning upon it, a celebrated perſon[e] hath long ſince ſhewn, with great compaſs of learning, and force of argument, That Jeſus, about to offer himſelf a ſacrifice on the croſs for our redemption, did, in conformity to a general practice, inſtitute the *laſt ſupper*, under the idea of *a feaſt after the ſacrifice*. So far that learned writer.

2. As to the immediate occaſion of the celebration; We are to conſider, that the great SACRIFICE ON THE CROSS was typi-

[e] Dr. CUDWORTH, in his *Diſcourſe concerning the true notion of the Lord's Supper.*

cally

SERM. X.

cally prefigured by ſeveral of the Temple-oblations; and particularly by the PASCHAL-LAMB. Now juſt before the *paſſion*, and while Jeſus was eating the *Paſchal-ſupper*, which was a Jewiſh *feaſt after or upon the ſacrifice*, he inſtitutes this holy Rite. And as it was his general cuſtom to allude, in his actions and expreſſions, to what paſſed before his eyes, or preſented itſelf to his obſervation [f]; who can doubt, when we ſee, in the very form of celebration, all the marks of a *ſacrificial-ſupper*, but that the divine Inſtitutor intended it ſhould bear the ſame relation to his *ſacrifice on the Croſs*, which the *paſchal-ſupper*, then celebrating, bore to the oblation of the *Paſchal-lamb*; that is, to be of the nature of a *feaſt after the ſacrifice*. For if this was not his purpoſe, and that no more was intended than a *general memorial, or remembrance of a dead benefactor*, why

[f] See Sir Iſaac Newton's *Obſervations on the Propheſies*, p. 148. where he takes notice how Jeſus, from the *approach of harveſt*, from *the lilies in bloom*, from the *fig-trees ſhooting out*, from *the ſheep kept in folds near the Temple, for ſacrifices* &c. took occaſion to inculcate his ſpiritual doctrines and precepts.

was

was this inſtant of time preferred to all other throughout the courſe of his miniſtry, any of which had been equally commodious? SERM. X.

This reaſoning receives additional ſtrength even from what hath been ſuppoſed to invalidate it, namely the concluding words of the inſtitution — *Do this in remembrance of me.* For tho' theſe words, conſidered alone, might ſignify no more than the remembrance of our obligations to him in general; yet when preceeded by --- *this is my body — this is my blood,* they neceſſarily imply the remembrance of his death and paſſion for us, in particular. And could there be a *feaſt after the ſacrifice* in which that ſacrifice was not commemorated?

It is true, the injunction of doing it *in remembrance* implies, that the celebration was to be continually repeated; which, it muſt be owned, was not the practice in the *feaſts after the ſacrifice:* on which, as we ſay, this holy Rite was modelled. But then if it differed from all others in this reſpect, let us obſerve, that the great Sacrifice itſelf, of which this Feaſt was a type,

differed

SERM. X.

differed no leſs from all other ſacrifices. The Jewiſh and Pagan Oblations had, or were ſuppoſed to have, only a paſſing and temporary virtue. The Sacrifice on the croſs is of perpetual efficacy; and will continue to operate till the conſummation of all things. It ſeemed fit, therefore, that the operating virtue of this Sacrifice ſhould be perpetually ſet before us, in a conſtant celebration of the *Feaſt upon it*.

We have now ſeen what may be naturally, and indeed what muſt be reaſonably inferred, of Chriſt's purpoſe in the *laſt Supper*, from the hiſtory of its inſtitution.

Let us try next what we can collect of St. PAUL's ſenſe in this matter, who hath occaſionally ſpoken at large concerning it. And here we ſhall find, that this very ſort of Feaſt, which the words of the inſtitution tacitly allude to, St. Paul, in order to ſhew the *ſpecific nature* of the Rite, expreſly draws a compariſon from; and at the ſame time, in order to ſhew the efficacy of it, informs us of the end and purpoſe of thoſe *Feaſts upon the ſacrifice*. It is, in that place of his firſt epiſtle to the Corinthians, where he re-

reproves the proſelytes to Chriſtianity for the idolatrous practice of eating, with the Gentiles, of things offered to idols, in their *feaſts upon the ſacrifice*. His words are theſe —— "I ſpeak as to wiſe men: "judge ye what I ſay. The cup of bleſſing "which we bleſs, is it not the commu- "nion of the blood of Chriſt? the bread "which we break, is it not the communion "of the body of Chriſt? For we being "many are one bread and one body: for "we are all partakers of that one bread. "Behold Iſrael after the fleſh: are not they "which eat of the ſacrifices partakers of "the altar? What ſay I then? That an "idol is any thing, or that which is offered "in ſacrifice to idols is any thing? But I "ſay that the things which the Gentiles "ſacrifice, they ſacrifice to devils, and not "to God: and I would not that ye ſhould "have fellowſhip with devils. Ye cannot "drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup "of devils: Ye cannot be partakers of the "Lord's table, and of the table of devils[g]."

SERM. X.

The Apoſtle profeſſeth, in this place, to write to theſe Corinthians under their aſ-

[g] 1 Cor. x. 15—21.

ſumed

SERM. X.

ſumed character of *wiſe men*. And tho' perhaps he may uſe the term a little ſarcaſtically, and in reproof of the *diviſions*, before objected to them; yet the natural inference drawn from an appeal to ſuch a character, holds not the leſs, for the reproof with which it is accompanied. My meaning is, That we may fairly conclude, the reaſoning to be ſuch as *wiſe men* would not diſdain to conſider; and ſo logically conducted as *wiſe men* would beſt comprehend. In a word, purſued with that ſcience and preciſion which leaves no room for a looſe, popular, and inaccurate interpretation.

In the firſt place, therefore, we may collect, that *The cup of bleſſing* is not ſimply a general commemoration of a deceaſed benefactor, but a commemoration of Chriſt's death and paſſion: It is the *communion of the blood of Chriſt*; an expreſſion, as we ſhall ſee hereafter, of the utmoſt elegance, to imply *a feaſt upon the ſacrifice*. But the inference, he draws from it, puts his meaning beyond all doubt — *For we being many are one bread and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread.* He ſays, *the partaking*

partaking of one bread, makes the receivers, of *many*, to become *one* body. A juſt inference, if this Rite be of the nature of *a feaſt upon the ſacrifice*; for then, the *communion of the body and blood of Chriſt* unites the receivers into one body, by an equal diſtribution of one common benefit: But if it be only a general commemoration of a deceaſed benefactor, it leaves the receivers as it found them: not *one body*; but *many ſeparate profeſſors* of one common Faith. SERM. X.

The Apoſtle having thus ſhewn, the laſt Supper to be of the nature of *a feaſt upon the ſacrifice*; for the truth of which he appeals to their own conceptions of it — *The cup of bleſſing — is it not the communion?* &c. *The bread, which we break, is it not the communion*, &c. He then endeavours to convince them of the impiety of their behaviour, from the nature of theſe feaſts, as they were underſtood both by Jews and Gentiles; who equally held, that they who EAT OF THE SACRIFICES WERE PARTAKERS OF THE ALTAR. But what had either of theſe *eaters of the ſacrifices* to do with the *partakers of the bread and wine* in

SERM. X. the laſt Supper, if the laſt Supper was not a feaſt of the ſame kind with their feaſts? But eſpecially, if the three feaſts, *Jewiſh*, *Pagan*, and *Chriſtian*, had not one common nature, how could the Apoſtle have inferred that this intercommunity was abſolutely inconſiſtent? *Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of devils*, &c. For tho' there might be IMPIETY in the promiſcuous uſe of Pagan and Chriſtian Rites; yet the INCONSISTENCY ariſes from their having a common nature; and ſo, conſequently, (as they had oppoſite originals) from their deſtroying one another's effects, in the very celebration. The reaſoning ſtands thus. Thoſe who eat *of the ſacrifices were partakers of the altar*. A ſacrifice at the altar was a FEDERAL rite. Conſequently, the *feaſt upon that ſacrifice* became a federal Rite likewiſe. *The Lord's table*, and *the table of devils*, therefore, being both federal Rites, the ſame man could not be partaker of both. This is the Apoſtle's argument to the *wiſe men* here appealed to: And we ſee it turns altogether on this poſtulatum, that the laſt Supper is of the nature of a *feaſt upon the ſacrifice*: Suppoſe it now a *general commemoration*

moration only of a dead benefactor, and all the reaſoning vaniſhes: For tho' a man cannot *execute two federal Rites* which deſtroy one another; yet a *federal rite* and a *bare remembrance*, in two contrary religions, have none of this oppoſition; but may be *celebrated*, if not without *impiety*, yet without any of that *inconſiſtency* which the learned Apoſtle here charges upon his licentious Corinthians. SERM. X.

But this was not the only abuſe they committed in the celebration of the *Lord's Supper*; nor this the only place in the Epiſtle declarative of the nature of that holy Rite. Theſe Corinthians, as appears by the next chapter, had been guilty of celebrating the Lord's Supper in a very indecent manner, by confounding it with their ordinary repaſts, or with convivial doings of their own invention, where charity and ſobriety were too frequently violated. Now this indiſcriminate celebration, the Apoſtle calls, the being *guilty of the body and blood of the Lord* [h]. A charge ſurely much aggravated, were the Lord's Supper inſtituted only to commemorate a dead benefactor.

[h] 1 Cor. xi. 27.

SERM. X. The Corinthians did not make a due diſtinction between their more common food and the eating and drinking in memory of a deceaſed friend. This doubtleſs was a high ingratitude. Yet to rank theſe criminals with the murderers of the *Lord of life* is a ſeverity in which we can hardly ſee the reaſon. But let us only ſuppoſe, that St. Paul conſidered the laſt Supper as a *feaſt upon a ſacrifice*, that is, as a Rite in which the benefits of Chriſt's death and paſſion were conveyed, and at the ſame time, ſlighted, and all becomes eaſy and natural. The profanation of ſuch a Rite by rendering his death ineffectual, was indeed aiding the purpoſe of his murderers; and therefore might be fitly compared, and juſtly equalled to the prodigious enormity of that crime.

Such then, I preſume, is the true nature of the LORD'S SUPPER. And was the adjuſting a preciſe idea of it, as it referred to a religious cuſtom of antiquity, a matter only of curioſity and ſpeculation, I might perhaps have left it to the eccleſiaſtical hiſtorian. But it appears to me to have important conſequences with regard both to our FAITH and WORSHIP. For,

1. If

1. If the laſt Supper be of the nature of *a feaſt after a ſacrifice*, then is it a declaration of Jeſus himſelf, that his death upon the croſs was a REAL SACRIFICE. For figurative expreſſion (as ſome are apt to deem the Goſpel repreſentation of Chriſt's *ſacrifice* and *atonement*) could never produce a religious Rite of divine appointment, ariſing from, and dependent on, a real ſpecific action. I ſay, of *divine appointment*, becauſe many of human original have been thus produced. Yet then only (which is a further ſupport to the preceding obſervation) when the *figure* had been miſtaken for the *ſubſtance*. SERM. X.

2. If the laſt Supper be of the nature of *a feaſt after a ſacrifice*, then is it productive of great and ſpecial benefits to the partakers. For the partakers of the Jewiſh and Gentile *feaſts after a ſacrifice* did, or were ſuppoſed to, communicate of the benefits of the ſacrifice.

HOWEVER, a very learned writer, whoſe principles of reaſoning, and method in deducing and conducting them, may ſerve

SERM. X. for a model to the fair Inquirer into truth, hath lately endeavoured to prove, in *A plain account of the nature and end of the ſacrament of the Lord's ſupper*, "that it "was inſtituted merely in remembrance of "Chriſt; that the bread to be taken and "eaten was appointed to be the memorial "of his body broken; and the wine to be "drunk was ordained to be the memorial "of his blood ſhed[i]." His intention in this was commendable. It was to free the *laſt Supper* from Superſtition; whoſe untimely fruit is at beſt, but a lifeleſs *rubrical piety*. Yet in purſuit of this commendable deſign, he hath gone, I preſume, too far: He hath taken away it's SPECIFIC nature, and left it nothing but it's GENERIC. He hath excluded the idea of *a feaſt after the ſacrifice*, and confined us to the notion of a mere *memorial* or *remembrance*.

He proceeds upon this great PROTESTANT PRINCIPLE; "That the Bible alone ought to determine our belief in all matters of faith and religious opinion." And this, which can never be too much inſiſted on, he urgeth with a freedom becoming a

[i] P. 24. 3d Ed.

lover

lover of truth, and a candour expreſſive of his diſinclination to controverſy. This may be truly ſaid of his general conduct. SERM. X.

But whether he hath been as happy in the APPLICATION of his *principle*, may be reaſonably made a matter of doubt.

His METHOD of reaſoning is not leſs judicious than the *choice* of his topics. He hath deduced a number of propoſitions tied and connected to one another, till, with theſe *cords of a man*, he hath fairly drawn the reader to his concluſion. Here, if he obtrudes upon us any falſe hold in the chain, the art or miſtake is eaſily detected: If all be ſtrong and ſound, the force of it will be felt to more advantage.

Let us examine his reaſoning, therefore, with the ſame preciſion and brevity with which he urgeth it: And, as we deny his CONCLUSION, ſhew the FAULTY LINK which hath impoſed upon his Readers; and, it may be, upon himſelf.

The Argument is compriſed in the *eight firſt propoſitions*. Of theſe, that which ſtands foremoſt is conceived in the following words, I. "The partaking of the Lord's "ſupper is not a duty of it ſelf; or a duty

SERM. X. "apparent to us from the nature of things: "but a duty made ſuch to Chriſtians by "the poſitive inſtitution of Jeſus Chriſt [k]."

The VIIIth (in which the argument concludes) is as follows, "It appears from theſe "paſſages, that the end for which our "Lord inſtituted this duty, was the *re-*"*membrance of himſelf*; that the bread to "be taken and eaten was appointed to be "the memorial of his body broken: and "the wine to be drunk was ordained to be "the memorial of his blood ſhed: or (ac-"cording to the expreſs words of St. Paul) "That the one was to be eaten, and the "other to be drunk, in REMEMBRANCE of "Chriſt; and this to be continued until he, "who was once preſent with his diſciples, "and is now abſent, ſhall come again [l]."

As this, which the learned writer uſes, is the method of the Demonſtrators, one would wonder by what force of invention he was enabled to deduce this concluſion. But we often ſee, that where force is wanting, a little matter of addreſs will ſupply it's place.

[k] P. A. p. 2. [l] Ibid. p. 23.

The

The IVth *Propoſition*, which runs thus, worked the machine as he would have it. SERM. X.

" It cannot be doubted but that he himſelf
" [Jeſus] SUFFICIENTLY DECLARED to his
" firſt and immediate followers the whole
" of what he deſigned ſhould be underſtood
" by it [the *ſacrament of the Lord's ſupper*]
" or implied in it."

Now I apprehend *this* to be the *faulty link*; and that all the connexion it hath with the *propoſitions*, which precede and follow it, lies in the unperceived ambiguity of the words, SUFFICIENTLY DECLARED: Which may either ſignify, *declared by expreſs words*; or on the other hand, *declared by ſignificative circumſtances*, ſuch as reſpect the time, the occaſion, the mode of acting, or the manner of ſpeaking. For the communication of our thoughts is carried on as well by EXPRESSIVE ACTIONS as by WORDS AND SOUNDS: nor did the firſt bear a ſmall part in the converſe of the Ancients [m]; eſpecially amongſt the Jewiſh people of every age, to the time in queſtion.

Hence it comes to paſs, that tho' we are agreed in the Propoſition, that *Jeſus*

[m] See Div. Leg. Vol. ii. Book iv. Sect. 4.

ſuffi-

SERM. X. *ſufficiently declared the whole of what he underſtood by his laſt Supper*, we draw ſo different concluſions: The learned writer, that it was ſimply a *remembrance of Chriſt*; I, that it was of the nature of *a feaſt upon the ſacrifice*. For He conſiders only what Jeſus in expreſs words SAID, at the inſtitution of this holy rite: I take in both what he SAID and DID; and not only that, but the MODE of ſaying and doing; relative to the time, the occaſion, the manners and the cuſtoms of the Age; as being perſuaded, that the ſpeaker's meaning, where the ſubject is of remote Antiquity, can be but very imperfectly underſtood without taking in all theſe things. A rule of interpretation, in which, I ſuppoſe the learned writer would concur with me, was the point concerning a difficulty in CLASSICAL expreſſion.

This then, I underſtand to be the only remaining queſtion, Whether or no the Diſciples of Jeſus (as it is agreed, their Maſter did not, in expreſs terms, call this rite, *a feaſt upon a ſacrifice)* could collect, from the whole of the circumſtances attending the inſtitution, that it was indeed of the nature of ſuch a feaſt? namely, from the

the critical time of the celebration, which was juſt before his paſſion, and at the jewiſh paſchal-ſupper; from the peculiarity of phraſe employed in the inſtitution, of which more hereafter; and from his accuſtomed manner, in the execution of his miniſtry, to adapt his words and actions to the ſcene or ſubject before him? Now, I ſuppoſe, that, from theſe circumſtances, one may fairly conclude, the Diſciples might and did collect that the *laſt Supper* was of the nature of a *feaſt upon* ſacrifice. SERM. X.

For 1. it was much in the genius of thoſe times to convey information, as well by actions and indirect circumſtances, as by ſpeech and explicite words. So that the hearer would be naturally as attentive to the one mode of inſtruction, as to the other.

2. Nothing can be conceived clearer or more expreſſive of ſuch *a feaſt*, than the circumſtances attending the inſtitution of this; as may appear from hence, That we, who live in an age when ſuch modes of converſe have been long diſuſed, yet ſee, in theſe circumſtances of time, occaſion, and mode of expreſſion, ſo great an aptitude to convey the idea of a feaſt *after the ſacrifice*, as, I am perſua-

SERM. X. perſuaded, ſufficiently aſſures every capable perſon concerning the nature of this feaſt.

3. Tho' the Diſciples, throughout the whole hiſtory of the Goſpel, are indeed repreſented as exceeding ſlow and dull to apprehend *the things of God*, Yet this concerned only the *ſpiritual meaning* of ſuch *things*; from which their inveterate prejudices for a *carnal œconomy* had ſhut up all their ſenſes; ſo as to deny any introduction to a *new* Religion, oppoſite to the temporary purpoſes of their *old* one. It doth not appear, they had any natural defect of apprehenſion to underſtand a plain alluſion to the rites and cuſtoms of their Law; which the inſtitution in queſtion directly objected to them.

But what is here urged will receive further light as well as ſtrength from the remarkable reaſoning of St. Paul upon this holy Myſtery. We have ſeen above, that the language he employs to explain his ideas, and the ſimilitude he brings to enforce his reaſoning, conſider the laſt Supper as *a feaſt upon a ſacrifice*. Now one of theſe things will needs follow, Either that he had an expreſs revelation, as well of its nature as of

of the Hiſtory of it's inſtitution, from Chriſt himſelf, at the time of his converſion; or that he logically inferred this it's nature from the ſeveral circumſtances of the inſtitution. SERM. X.

If we hold the firſt, The diſpute is at an end: If the ſecond, What hindered the reſt of the diſciples from doing the ſame?

I ſhould be inclined to the latter opinion; and that all which was revealed to him by Jeſus, was the hiſtory of the inſtitution as we find it recorded in the Goſpel. His own words, where he tells us how he came by his knowledge, ſeem to decide in favour of this opinion. "For I have received (ſays he) "of the Lord, that which alſo I deliver unto "you, That the Lord Jeſus, the ſame night "in which he was betrayed, took bread: "And when he had given thanks, he brake "it, and ſaid, Take, eat; this is my body, "which is broken for you: this do in re-"membrance of me. After the ſame man-"ner alſo he took the cup, when he had "ſupped, ſaying, This cup is the new "teſtament in my blood: this do ye, as "oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of "me. For as often as ye eat this bread

SERM. X. "and drink this cup, ye do ſhew the Lord's "death till he come [n]." This is the whole of his account concerning the hiſtory of the inſtitution. He then proceeds, in the next verſe to reaſon from it — "Wherefore "whoever ſhall eat this bread and drink "this cup of the Lord unworthily ſhall be "guilty of the body and blood of Chriſt."

So far then as to the SUFFICIENT DECLARATION of the mind of Jeſus to his *immediate followers*, concerning the nature of this holy Rite. But the learned writer well obſerving, that CUDWORTH, in the celebrated tract mentioned above, had ſtrongly inſiſted on the reaſoning of this *immediate follower*, St. Paul [o], as declarative

[n] 1 Cor. xi. 23.

[o] "But leſt we ſhould ſeem to ſet up fancies of our "own, we come now to DEMONSTRATE that the "Lord's ſupper is a *feaſt upon ſacrifice*; in the ſame "manner with the *Jewiſh* and *Heathen*. And that "from a place of Scripture where all theſe three are "compared together and made exact parallels to one "another. 1 Cor. x. 14—21. Where the Apo-"ſtle's ſcope being to convince the Corinthians of the "unlawfulneſs of eating things ſacrificed to Idols, he "ſhews, that tho' an Idol was *phyſically* nothing, yet "*morally*, to eat of things ſacrificed to Idols in the "Idol's temple, was to conſent with the ſacrifices,

of the laſt ſupper's being a *feaſt upon a ſacri-* SERM.
fice, found it incumbent on him to remove X.

" and to be guilty of them. This he illuſtrates *firſt* by
" a parallel Rite in the Chriſtian religion, where eating
" and drinking of the body and blood of Chriſt in the
" Lord's ſupper is a real COMMUNICATION in his
" death and ſacrifice. *Secondly* from another parallel
" of the ſame rite amongſt the Jews, where always
" they that ate of the ſacrifices were accounted par-
" takers of the Altar. Therefore, as to eat the body
" and blood of Chriſt in the Lord's ſupper is to be
" made partaker of *his* ſacrifice; as to eat of the Jew-
" iſh ſacrifices was to partake in the *legal* ſacrifices
" themſelves; ſo to eat of things offered up in ſacri-
" fice to idols was to be made partakers of the idol-
" ſacrifices, and therefore was unlawful. The things,
" which the Gentiles ſacrificed, they ſacrificed to
" *Devils*, but Chriſt's body and blood was offered up
" in ſacrifice to God, and therefore they could not
" partake both of the ſacrifice of the true God, and
" the ſacrifice of Devils. St. Paul's argument here
" muſt needs ſuppoſe a PERFECT ANALOGY between
" theſe three, and that they are ALL PARALLELS to
" one another, or elſe it hath no ſtrength. Where-
" fore I conclude from hence that the *Lord's ſupper* is
" the ſame amongſt Chriſtians, in reſpect of the
" Chriſtian ſacrifice, that, amongſt the Jews, the
" feaſts upon the legal ſacrifices were; and, amongſt
" the Gentiles, the feaſts upon the idol-ſacrifices; and
" therefore *epulum ſacrificiale* or *epulum ex oblatis*" —
A diſcourſe concerning the true nature of the Lord's ſup-
per. Chap. iv.

that

SERM. X. that difficulty before he could eſtabliſh his Hypotheſis.

First then, he gives us a *long* paraphraſe on the reaſoning of St. Paul [p]; which, you may be ſure, he makes very conformable to his own Syſtem. But to this, it is enough to oppoſe the *ſhort* one of Dr. Cudworth, here below. And what is wanting in the weight of its authority, ſome may think to be ſufficiently ſupplied by the advantage of a certain favourable prejudice, "That the ſenſe which is eaſieſt, and needs the feweſt words to explain, is likelieſt to be the true." However, where the learned writer ſupports his own paraphraſe by *criticiſm* or *reaſoning*, he will deſerve all our reſpect and attention.

First then, on the words — *The cup — which we bleſs, is it not the communion of the blood of Chriſt? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Chriſt?* — he obſerves, that "tho' this be interpreted by many learned men to ſignify "a *communion*, or partaking of *all* the "*benefits* of *Chriſt's body* broken, and *blood* "ſhed, yet, he thinks, the words cannot

[p] From p. 32 to 39.

"have

" have that ſignification — That, the greek SERM.
" word Κοινώνια, uſed by the Apoſtle, and X.
" the word *communion*, which is latin, both
" ſignify a JOINT PARTAKING, or a par-
" taking of ſomething in common with
" others of the ſame ſociety. And this
" *joint partaking* of Chriſt's body and blood
" can ſignify no more than eating his body
" and drinking his blood as a ſociety of his
" diſciples [q]."

To this, it may be ſufficient to obſerve, that if, by the word Κοινωνία, the Apoſtle had meant, as the learned writer ſuppoſeth he did mean, *a joint-partaking, or a partaking in common with our fellow Chriſtians of the bread and wine*, he would have *expreſſed* his meaning. In the text, there is not a tittle of *fellow Chriſtians* or *others* of the ſame ſociety. It is Κοινωνία τῦ αἵματος — Κοινωνία τῦ σώματος — *the communion of the blood — the communion of the body*. Had he meant what the learned writer makes him to mean, he would doubtleſs have ſaid Κοινωνία ὑμῶν εἰς τὸ σῶμα — *Your communion in the body*, i. e. your eating of it jointly. St. Paul knew how to ex-

[q] p. 39 — 40.

SERM. X. preſs himſelf properly. And if this had been his meaning, he would have expreſſed himſelf in ſome ſuch manner; as appears from a paſſage in his epiſtle to the Philippians, where he is profeſſedly ſpeaking of this joint participation of a bleſſing. Κοινωνία ὑμῶν εἰς τὸ Εὐαγγέλιον[r]. — *Your communion in the Goſpel*, i. e. your joint belief and profeſſion of it.

But the fallacy of the reaſoning ſeems to lye in the ſenſe the learned writer gives to the Greek and Latin words, as if they could ſignify nothing but a *joint partaking* with ſome other man, or body of men: and then indeed they could ſignify nothing elſe, in this place, but what they ſignified in all others. But He ſeems not to have conſidered, that tho' indeed this be their direct and original ſenſe, yet, as is common to moral modes, they had taken another; by their being applied to *ſpiritual* beings, as well as to man; nay even to *inanimate*, as we ſee in the text laſt quoted, Κοινωνία τῦ Εὐαγγελίυ — *the communion of the Goſpel.* Now, when thus applied, the idea

[r] Phil. i. 5.

of

of our joint fellowſhip with men is not contained, except where that fellowſhip is expreſſed: as will appear from the following words of the ſame Apoſtle. Κοινωνία τῦ υἱῦ — *the communion of the Son*[s]; Κοινωνία τῦ ἁγίυ πνεύματος — *the communion of the Holy Ghoſt*[t]; Κοινωνία τῦ μυστηρίυ — *the communion of the myſtery*[v], i. e. the Goſpel. In all theſe inſtances, there is no pretence for admitting the idea of *a joint-partaking with our fellow-Chriſtians*; with whom, however, we believe in common in the *Son*, in the *holy Ghoſt*, and the *glorious myſtery of the Goſpel*; becauſe here is no joint act, defined by time and place, as in the inſtitution of the laſt Supper: which, I ſuppoſe, is the reaſon for the learned Author's giving this ſenſe to *the cómmunion of the body and blood*. SERM. X.

But to make it ſtill more apparent, that where the ſacred writers uſe the word Κοινωνία in this conſtruction, to ſignify our *union with our ſalvation*, no ſuch *joint-partaking* is to be underſtood, it will not be improper to conſider the following paſſages.

[s] 1 Cor. i. 9. [t] 2 Cor. xiii. 13. [v] Eph. iii. 9.

SERM. X. St. Paul ſays, he aims at the *fellowſhip or communion of Chriſt's ſufferings* — Κοινωνίαν παθημάτων αὐτοῦ [w], which he makes to conſiſt in a conformity to Chriſt's death. And St. John expreſly diſtinguiſheth the communion with Chriſt, from the communion or fellowſhip with one another. Ἐὰν εἴπωμεν ὅτι κοινωνίαν ἔχομεν μετ' αὐτοῦ — κοινωνίαν ἔχομεν μετ' ἀλλήλων [x]. *But if we ſay we have fellowſhip with him --- we have fellowſhip one with another.*

The learned writer then goes on, to *reaſon* on the paſſage in queſtion: and, when he hath done that, returns again to criticiſe the word Κοινωνία, afreſh. It may not be improper, therefore, before we proceed to his *reaſoning* on the paſſage, to conſider what he further urgeth in behalf of his ſenſe of Κοινωνία; and ſo, lay all his criticiſms together. He tells us then, that "there is little ground for the remark of "ſome learned men, that the word Κοινωνία *(communion)* is uſed where the in- "ward or *ſpiritual* part of the Lord's ſup- "per is ſpoken of; and the word μετέχειν,

[w] Philipp. iii. 10. [x] 1 Gen. Ep. i. 6, 7.

(par-

" *(partaking)* afterwards uſed, where the *external* only is meant: when we ſee the word Κοινωνοὶ, *(communicants)* here uſed with regard to idols; where no *ſpiritual* part could be thought of. For the whole argument ſuppoſes an *Idol* to be *nothing*; and the Chriſtians concerned, to have no thought of receiving good or harm from thoſe idols. — Now the ſame words being uſed with regard to Chriſt and thoſe Dæmons [Κοινωνία and Κοινωνοὶ, in one verſe; and μετέχειν in another] it follows that *Communion* and *partaking* are words of the ſame ſignification in both caſes[y]."

SERM. X.

There is no ground, he ſays, for the diſtinction; ſince, in the place in queſtion, Κοινωνία is uſed when *no ſpiritual part could be thought of*. What, *no ſpiritual part*, when the queſtion was of communicating with *Idols?* No, For St. Paul ſays, *an Idol is nothing*. This is true. But he ſays, at the ſame time, that theſe *Idols* were *Devils*; for that the *Gentiles ſacrificed to Devils, and that thoſe who eat of ſuch ſa-*

[y] p. 45, 46.

SERM. X. *crifices* had *communion with Devils.* Now, the DEVIL, in St. Paul's opinion, was *something*[z]. He ſays, indeed, *an Idol is nothing.* But does he mean a metaphyſical non-entity? Surely, not: for he immediately adds, that the *thing offered to them* was likewiſe *nothing.* He muſt uſe the negation therefore in a *moral* ſenſe, "That no benefits could accrue to the idolatrous

[z] Whatever notions the Gentiles, or the gentilized Jews of this time, had of *Dæmons*, every man who reads the New Teſtament with attention will be forced to confeſs, that the ſacred writers never uſe the word (and they uſe it often) but they always mean Satan and his Angels, the Powers of darkneſs, Reprobates from God and goodneſs. *The good and evil Dæmons of gentiliſm*, were indeed thoſe *Idols*, not of the *Altar*, but *of the brain*, which the ſacred writers eſteemed metaphyſical NOTHINGS. But, indeed of that capital enemy of mankind, the Pagans ſeem to have received ſome obſcure tradition: which they mixed with their own-invented ſuperſtitions. And this preſerving ſome traces of reſemblance to the truth, and giving ſome conformity in the language of Truth and Error, hath made ſome men draw ſtrange conſequences, as if the Founders of our holy Religion had taken the advantage of pagan Superſtition to form a ſyſtem of DEMONOLOGY agreeable to the preconceived fancies of their Converts.

wor-

worſhipers." But this is conſiſtent enough with the metaphyſical entity of the Devil: and while that remained, a *ſpiritual part might well be thought of*, when the Apoſtle ſpoke of *communicating with him*. The conſequence is, that the criticiſm of thoſe *learned men*, who diſtinguiſhed between Κοινωνία and μέτεχειν, ſtands good, for any thing this learned writer hath ſaid to the contrary. Conſider the words --- *What ſay I then? That the Idol is any thing, or that which is offered to Idols any thing? But* I ſay *that the things which the gentiles ſacrifice, they ſacrifice to Devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye ſhould have fellowſhip* (or communion) *with Devils*. There ſeems to be no great difficulty in the Apoſtle's meaning; which amounts plainly to this --- "Tho' ye can poſſibly receive no benefit from Idols, as your protectors and benefactors, Ye may yet receive real damage from the Devil, the declared enemy of mankind." So that admitting, with the learned writer, That the *Chriſtians concerned, had no thought of receiving good or harm from thoſe Idols*, yet, (what is more to the purpoſe) we ſee St. Paul *had*.

SERM. X.

SERM. X.

We come now to the learned writer's REASONING on the paſſage. "If we obſerve "the Apoſtle's deſign in this argument, "it will appear that he had not the leaſt "occaſion to ſpeak here of the BENEFITS "of Chriſt's death. His deſign was to in-"cite the Corinthians to *flee from idolatry.* "by ſhewing them what a crime it muſt "be in a Chriſtian to do what was account-"ed honour to the Gods of the Heathens, "by feaſting upon and *partaking* of their "ſacrifices. In order to do this it was not "his purpoſe to ſay, *By eating bread and* "*drinking wine in the Lord's ſupper, you* "*partake of all the* BENEFITS *of Chriſt's* "*death*; and therefore you cannot eat of "the Heathen ſacrifices. Neither do I ſee "that this is any argument at all to the "point in view. But to ſay, *by eating* "*bread and drinking wine &c. you eat, drink,* "*and partake of them, not as at a common* "*meal, but of bread and wine, called the* "*body and blood of Chriſt, in remembrance* "*of and in honour to him, and acknowledge-*"*ment of his being your maſter, therefore you* "*cannot, without great abſurdity and guilt,* "*pay the ſame ſort of honour to falſe gods by* "*feaſting*

" *feaſting with their votaries, upon their ſa-* SERM.
" *crifices.* This, I ſay, is an argument to his X.
purpoſe, and proves all he aimed at [a].

I. Firſt then, Admitting the learned Author's repreſentation of St. Paul's *deſign* to be fairly given " that it was only to incite " the Corinthians to flee from Idolatry," yet I do not ſee, according to the Author's own way of reaſoning, why it was not as much to the purpoſe of the Apoſtle to urge the laſt Supper's being a *communion of the body and blood in a feaſt upon the ſacrifice*, as to urge that the laſt Supper was not a *common meal, but celebrated in remembrance of and in honour to Chriſt.* Now, this laſt, he owns is *an argument to the purpoſe.* Why then will he exclude the other? He immediately ſubjoins the reaſon, — *this* ALONE *proves all that he* [the Apoſtle] *aimed at.* But here, as I ſuſpect, lurks a fallacy. --- Becauſe *this alone* proves the great abſurdity and guilt of theſe idolatrous Corinthians; Therefore, they were not to be puſhed further. According to this reaſoning, Whenever a Miniſter of juſtice proſecutes a tranſgreſſor of the Laws, it would

[a] P. 40, 41.

he

SERM. X. be to the purpoſe to prove him guilty of *theft*, But to prove that theft, a *ſacrilege*, utterly impertinent. In a word, the learned writer argues as if he thought it much to the purpoſe to urge the *genus* of the action, but nothing at all, to inſiſt on the *ſpecies* of it.

But it will be objected, That our illuſtration of the learned perſon's argument hath a glare of abſurdity which we do not ſee in the argument it ſelf. It is true, it hath ſo: For in the argument it ſelf, the glare is taken off by the artful or accidental ſubſtitution of one term for another; the *effects of the thing* for the *thing it ſelf*. The learned perſon obſerves, that it was not to St. Paul's *purpoſe (when his deſign was to excite the Corinthians to flee from idolatry) to talk of the* BENEFITS *of Chriſt's death*. I do not know any one who thought it was: Not even St. Paul himſelf, if we may judge by his ſilence. For he hath not a ſyllable about BENEFITS. *Of the communion of the body and blood of Chriſt* he indeed ſpeaks largely: And this ſeemeth to the purpoſe: For if the celebration of the Lord's Supper brought them to ſo near a conjunction with

Him, it muſt be an aggravation both of their guilt and their abſurdity to aſſiſt at the celebration of a ſimilar feaſt, in a Religion at enmity with His. The *benefits*, ariſing from this near conjunction, is another conſideration; which doth not *directly*, but *obliquely only*, affect the point in queſtion. SERM. X.

II. But ſecondly, To excite the Corinthians to flee from Idolatry was not (as ſeems to be inſinuated) the *whole* of the Apoſtle's intention, in this place. That matter is particularly inforced in the *eighth* Chapter: and tho' it be here taken up again in the *tenth*, it is only as it maketh part of a different ſubject, namely the VARIOUS PROFANATIONS OF THE LORD'S TABLE, of which, the Corinthians had been guilty. And this is handled from the firſt verſe of the tenth Chapter to the thirty fourth verſe of the eleventh; interrupted by a digreſſion, concerning *order in their aſſemblies*[a]: For they had neglected the rules he left with them concerning that point of Diſcipline. And his words, *Be ye followers of me, &c.*[b] ſuggeſting a re-

[a] From ver. 2 to 16 of chap. xi. [b] chap. xi. ver. 1.

proof,

SERM. X.

proof, it occaſioned the intermediate digreſſion: from whence, he returns to his main ſubject, *the profanations of the Lord's table:* which he had introduced by an obſervation of the ſame miſbehaviour in their Forefathers: Who, like them, when under the conduct of Moſes, had, in various ways, abuſed thoſe miraculous bleſſings of manna from Heaven, and water from the Rock; which St. Paul elegantly accommodates to this occaſion — *For they did all eat the ſame ſpiritual meat; and did all drink the ſame ſpiritual drink; for they drank of that ſpiritual rock that followed them; and that rock was Chriſt*[c]. Now the profanations in queſtion conſiſted in theſe two points, The frequenting the Pagan feaſts[d]: And the making no diſtinction between the Lord's Supper and their ordinary repaſt[e]. But the crime of profanation riſing in proportion to the dignity of the thing profaned, it was much to the Apoſtle's purpoſe, if not to ſpeak of the *benefits* of Chriſt's death, yet to ſhew the

[c] Chap. x. 3, 4. [d] Chap. x.
[e] Chap. xi. from ver. 17.

laſt

laſt Supper to be the *communion of the body and blood of Chriſt.* SERM. X.

The learned writer's other argument againſt the received interpretation, is as follows --- "*Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord* " *and the cup of Devils, Ye cannot be par-* " *takers of the Lord's table and the table of* " *Devils*, is the concluſion of the Apoſtle's " reaſoning. And this cannot poſſibly " ſignify "Ye cannot be partakers of the " BENEFITS of the Lord's table and of the " BENEFITS of the table of the heathen de- " ities:" for no benefit could poſſibly be " ſuppoſed by him to acrue from theſe, " even to the heathen worſhipers them- " ſelves.---Conſequently, when, at the be- " ginning of the argument, and to intro- " duce only his concluſion, he aſks, *The* " *cup — is it not the communion* &c. he " muſt be ſuppoſed to mean what alone " was to his purpoſe, "Is not our *joint-* " *partaking* of bread and wine in the Lord's " ſupper a *religious* partaking of what are " *memorials* of Chriſt's body and blood?"— " the premiſes therefore cannot be ſuppoſed " to contain in them what has no relation " to the concluſion drawn from them.

" In

SERM. X. "In the *concluſion of partaking of the table* "*of Devils* it muſt be allowed that nothing "is ſaid about *benefits*: in the *premiſſes* "therefore, *of the communion of the body* "*and blood*, which lead to this, it was not "the Apoſtle's deſign to ſpeak of *benefits*; "but only of the *ſignificancy* of that rite, "as an *act of religious honour* paid by "Chriſtians to their maſter [f]."

Now, not to repeat what hath been already obſerved of the Fallacy, which runs thro' the learned perſon's whole argument, by ſubſtituting BENEFITS for COMMUNION; which, however, is of much importance: For, tho' the partakers of the pagan feaſts could receive no *benefits* from Devils, yet they might be in *communion* with them: Not, I ſay to repeat what hath been already urged, It will be ſufficient to obſerve againſt the learned perſon's reaſoning, that it is founded on a ſuppoſition, that St. Paul could not argue, *ad hominem*, as the logicians ſpeak: For if He could *ſo* argue, the obſervation hath no force. It is agreed, that *St. Paul believed no benefits could accrue to the heathen worſhipers from their*

[f] P. 43, 44.

Idols.

Idols. But, if those worshipers themselves believed they *could*, what should hinder a good reasoner, like St. Paul, from telling these paganized Christians that the benefits from Idol-feasts, and the benefits from the Lord's table, were incongruous and inconsistent; what, I say, but the supposed illogical liberty of arguing *ad hominem?* That these *early Christians*, who went knowingly to the idol feasts, were as likely to expect benefit from them, as the *early Jews*, who joined idolatrous worship to that of the God of Israel, is what, I think, no man can deny. Against such Christians, St. Paul might reason hypothetically; and, for argument's sake, grant the benefits of the Idol-feasts to be real, like those of the Lord's table. And this, I suppose, is the common practice of all mankind in their reasoning on the like occasion.

SERM. X.

The learned writer then proceeds to the confutation of those who hold the last Supper to be an *eucharistical Sacrifice, commemorative* of that upon the Cross. But with this, neither I, nor, as I apprehend, the Church of England, hath any thing to do [g].

[g] The pious and truly respectable Mr. Rob. Nelson

It

SERM. X.

It will be of more uſe to reflect upon the learned writer's method of eſtabliſhing

hath endeavoured to free this doctrine, of an *euchariſtical ſacrifice*, from the apparent abſurdity *of one ſacrifice's being commemorative of another*, by this Argument. "That it's being commemorative no more "hindered it from being a proper ſacrifice than the "typical and figurative ſacrifices of the old law "hindered them from being proper ſacrifices. For "as to be a type (ſaith this learned man) doth not "deſtroy the nature and notion of a legal ſacrifice, "ſo, to be REPRESENTATIVE and commemorative "doth not deſtroy the nature of an evangelical ſacri-"fice." *Life of Bp. Bull*, p. 483. This is well put; but will hardly ſtand upright. In order to detect the fallacy of this ingenious reaſoning, I muſt beg leave to have recourſe to the principles laid down in the *Div. Leg.* Book iv. § 4.

It is allowed then, that the *paſchal lamb*, and the *Lord's ſupper*, are both *Signs with a moral import*; and, conſequently, are both TYPES. How comes it to paſs then, (might this learned perſon aſk) that the *paſchal lamb* will admit the nature of a *ſacrifice*, and yet the Lord's Supper will not? For this plain reaſon. The relation which the *Paſchal lamb* bore to an *Arche-type* on the Croſs was, for the wiſe ends of providence, at the time of the inſtitution, kept a ſecret from the followers of the Law. Its *moral import* therefore, (and as a TYPE it muſt have a *moral import*) could be only a *Sacrifice*. The caſe is widely

his

his own Hypotheſis. It hath been hitherto eſteemed an eſſential canon of true cri- SERM. X.

different in the inſtitution of the *Lord's ſupper*. It is declared, by the Inſtitutor himſelf, to be a *commemoration* of his death and ſufferings. Here, the relation between the *type* and *archetype* is declared to all: conſequently, it's *moral import* is a *commemorative feaſt on a ſacrifice*; but the idea of ſuch a feaſt neceſſarily EXCLUDES a *ſacrifice*; for the *Thing done*, and the *commemoration of the thing done*, can never be an action of the ſame kind. However, admitting it could be ſo; yet this type having it's *moral import* in a *commemoration*, can never acquire another, of a *ſacrifice*: which, in *metaphyſical* conception, would be as monſtrous as a *double body* in the *natural*. But, to ſhew, in one word, the difference, where the learned perſon thinks there is none — Take away the nature of a *ſacrifice* from the Type of the *Paſchal lamb*, and you leave it *no moral import*: that is, you deprive it of it's nature of a *Type*. But take away the idea of a *ſacrifice* from the *Lord's ſupper* and it ſtill remains a *Type*; having ſtill a *moral import*, by being a *commemoration* of the death and ſufferings of our Lord.

The Learned Writer himſelf ſeemed to have ſome confuſed ſuſpicion of the weakneſs of his inference from the *typical Sacrifices of the old Law*; and therefore ſeeing but ſmall connexion between a *Sacrifice* and a *Commemoration*; which is the idea Scripture gives us of the *Lord's ſupper*; he adds the word, REPRESENTATION; which is indeed conſiſtent enough with a Sacrifice: for tho', of a *commemorative ſacrifice*, we have

 ticiſm,

SERM. X. ticiſm, that, in order to form a right judgment of the ſpecific nature of any Ordinance or Inſtitution of Antient times, we ſhould have a ſpecial regard to the notions, manners, and cuſtoms of thoſe times; ſince it can hardly be ſuppoſed, that any ſolemn, or public Rite of religion would be inſtituted without ſome reference to the then prevailing Opinions. But the learned Writer of the PLAIN ACCOUNT, (as if the very title of his book would have been falſified by ſuch an inquiry) hath attempted to explain *the nature and end of the ſacrament of the Lord's ſupper* with as little regard to the genius and manners of Antiquity, as an Engliſh Lawyer would take of them, in his Reading on a modern act of Parliament.

no inſtance in practice, and can ſee no propriety in ſpeculation; yet a *repreſentative ſacrifice* is very good ſenſe, and may be well ſupported in the command to *Abraham* to offer up his Son. But then, the Hiſtory of the Inſtitution of the Lord's ſupper is abſolutely ſilent, concerning this *repreſentation*. In concluſion however, let us obſerve, That a *commemorative ſacrifice*, in the ſenſe the learned perſon contends for it, is one thing; and *ſacrifices at a commemorative feaſt*, of which Antiquity has many examples, is quite another.

But

But the ill effects of ſuch a partial Enquiry cannot be better underſtood than by reflecting, that the very ſame method of interpretation, which hath led the learned Writer into one extreme, concerning *the* NATURE OF THE THING; hath led the Papiſts into the direct oppoſite, concerning the MEANING OF THE WORDS. The celebrated BOSSUET, the moſt artful, as well as moſt eloquent, Advocate of the papal Cauſe, reſts all the ſtrength of the LITERAL interpretation of the words, *This is my body* — *This is my blood* — on this very PRINCIPLE, "That the inſtitution of the Lord's ſupper "ſtands ſingle and alone; detached from "all preceding diſcourſe; and unrelated to "any contemporary Rite." His words are theſe — "Zuinglius ſaid in plain terms, that "there was no miracle, nor any thing in"comprehenſible in the Euchariſt: that the "bread broken was a repreſentation of the "body offered, and the wine poured out, "of the blood which was ſhed: that Jeſus "Chriſt, when he inſtituted theſe ſacred "ſymbols, gave them the Names of the "things ſignified: however, that theſe were "not naked Signs, nor a ſimple Repreſen-

SERM. X.

SERM. X.

" tation; for that the remembrance and
" belief of the body offered and the blood
" ſhed for us, nouriſhed and ſuſtained our
" ſouls; and further, that the holy Spirit
" ſealed the remiſſion of ſins, in our hearts.
" This, he ſaid, was the whole of the
" Myſtery. Now it muſt be owned, that
" neither human reaſon nor common ſenſe
" ſuffered the leaſt force in this explanation.
" The words of Scripture only, made all
" the difficulty. And yet, when one party
" urged, — *This is my body*; The Other had
" their anſwer ready —*I am the vine — I*
" *am the door — that rock was Chriſt* — It
" is true, that theſe inſtances came not up
" to the point. When Jeſus Chriſt ſaid
" — *This is my body — This is my blood* —
" he was neither propounding a Parable, nor
" explaining an Allegory. The *Words*,
" WHICH ARE DETACHED AND SEPARATE
" FROM ALL OTHER DISCOURSE, carry
" their whole meaning in themſelves. The
" buſineſs in hand was the inſtitution of
" a *new Rite*, which required the uſe of
" ſimple terms: And that place in Scrip-
" ture is yet to be diſcovered, where the
" Sign hath the name of the Thing ſignified
" given

" given to it at the moment of the inſtitu- SERM.
" tion of the Rite, and WITHOUT ANY X.
" LEADING PREPARATION [h]." On the

[h] Zuingle diſoit poſitivement, qu'il n'y avoit point de miracle dans l'Euchariſtie, ni rien d' incomprehenſible ; que le pain rompu nous repréſentoit le corps immolé, et le vin, le ſang répandu ; que Jeſus Chriſt en inſtituant ces ſignes ſacrés leur avoit donné le nom de la choſe ; que ce n'étoit pourtant pas un ſimple ſpectacle, ni des ſignes tout à fait nûs ; que la mémoire et la foi du corps immolé et du ſang répandu ſoutenoit notre ame ; que cependant le Saint-Eſprit ſcelloit dans les cœurs la remiſſion des pechés ; et que c'étoit-la tout le myſtere. La raiſon et le ſens humain n'avoient rien à ſuffrir dans cette explication. L'Ecriture faiſoit de la peine ; mais quand les uns oppoſoient, *Ceci eſt mon corps*, les autres repondoient, *Je ſuis la vigne, je ſuis la porte, le pierre étoit Chriſt.* Il eſt vrai que ces exemples n'etoient pas ſemblables. Ce n'étoit ni en propoſant une parabole, ni en expliquant une allegorie, que Jeſus Chriſt avoit dit, *Ceci eſt mon corps, ceci eſt mon ſang.* Ces PAROLES DÉTACHÉES DE TOUT AUTRE DISCOURS portoient tout leur ſens en elles-mêmes. Il s'agiſſoit d'une nouvelle inſtitution qui devoit être faite en termes ſimples, et on n'avoit encore trouvé aucun lieu de l'Ecriture, où un ſigne d'inſtitution reçût le nom de la choſe, au moment qu'on l'inſtituoit, et SANS AUCUNE PRÉPARATION PRECEDENTE. *Hiſtoire des Variations, Tom.* i. p. 73—4. *Ed. Par.* 1730, 8vo.

SERM. X. foundation of this reaſoning it is that the celebrated Prelate obſerves, in another place,

" That Luther continued invincibly ſtruck " with the force and ſimplicity of the " words—*This is my body—This is my blood*— " The Church had believed, without diffi- " culty, that Jeſus Chriſt, in order to con- " ſummate his Sacrifice, and fulfill the an- " cient Figures, hath given us to eat the " real ſubſtance of his fleſh, offered up for " us. She had the ſame idea of the blood ſhed " for our iniquities. Accuſtomed, from her " birth, to myſteries incomprehenſible, and " to the ineffable favours of divine love, " thoſe impenetrable wonders contained " in the literal ſenſe did not ſhock her " Faith: And Luther never could perſuade " himſelf, that Jeſus Chriſt either purpoſe- " ly obſcured the inſtitution of his Sacra- " ment; or that words ſo ſimple were ca- " pable of conveying ſo VIOLENT A FI- " GURE [i]."

[i] Luther demeura frappé invinciblement de la force et de la ſimplicité des ces paroles: *Ceci eſt mon corps, Ceci eſt mon ſang*; — L'Egliſe avoit cru ſans peine, que pour conſommer ſon ſacrifice et les figures anciennes Jeſus-Chriſt nous avoit donné à manger la propre ſub-

Thus

Thus, we find, the learned Writer of the *Plain Account*, and M. Boſſuet lay the foundation of their different reaſonings in one COMMON PRINCIPLE, "That the inſtitution of the Lord's Supper was detached from all other diſcourſe, unrelated to any other Rite, and unconcerned with any foregoing preparation." Now, altho' the falſehood of this principle had not been fully evinced, as, in truth, it has, where I ſhew the relation it bears to the Paſchal Supper; and how eaſily and naturally that Supper introduced this Chriſtian Inſtitution, Yet the extremes, into which it hath carried theſe two learned Writers, of a MERE COMMEMORATION on the one hand, and a REAL PRESENCE on the other, would raiſe a ſuſpicion that this *common prin-* SERM. X.

ſtance de ſa chair immolée pour nous. Elle avoit la même penſée du ſang répandu pour nos pechés. Accoutumée dès ſon origine à des myſteres incomprehenſibles et à des marques ineffables de l'amour divin, les merveilles impénetrables que renfermoit le ſens literal, ne l'avoient point rebutée; et Luther ne pût jamais ſe perſuader, ni que Jeſus-Chriſt eût voulu obſcurcir exprès l'inſtitution de ſon ſacrament, ni que des paroles ſi ſimples fuſſent ſuſceptibles des FIGURES SI VIOLENTES —— Id. ib. p. 43.

SERM. X.

ciple was neither founded in reaſon, nor ſupported by fact.

I have ſaid enough of the *commemoration:* And now turn to the REAL PRESENCE of the Catholic Biſhop.

He reſts it, we ſee, upon the force of the WORDS; which, in his opinion, can admit of no *figurative* ſenſe, without doing extreme violence to human language and expreſſion. Indeed, as far as regards *the hardneſs* of the figure, I believe, moſt proteſtant Doctors have been ready enough to join with him.

But this difficulty, great as it is, I preſume, the preceding account of the ſpecific nature of the Lord's ſupper will entirely remove. By that account it appears, that the words of the inſtitution are FIGURATIVE; and ſo far from ſuffering any violent converſion, that they fall into the figure, naturally and eaſily; Nay, what is above all, into a FIGURE, abſolutely NECESSARY.

We have ſhewn the laſt Supper to be of the nature of the *feaſts upon ſacrifice:* in which feaſts, the very *body* ſacrificed was eaten. Now as this Rite was to be inſtituted, and firſt celebrated, by the very Perſon himſelf who

who was offered up for our Redemption, the Inſtitution muſt needs precede the Sacrifice. Of neceſſity therefore, ſome *ſymbolic elements* muſt be given, to be received by the Participants, inſtead of the very body and blood. But, as the fleſh of the animal ſacrificed was the meat eaten in the *feaſt after the ſacrifice*, the ſymbolic elements of BREAD AND WINE are naturally, properly, and elegantly called, his BODY AND BLOOD. SERM. X.

Again, If it were the purpoſe of divine Wiſdom to give this *ſpecific* nature to the laſt Supper, we muſt needs conclude that Jeſus would *intimate* ſuch its nature to the firſt Participants.

But if (as, in fact, was the caſe) the ſame Wiſdom thought proper to intimate this only by the *occaſion*, and through the *words* of the inſtitution, then the figurative expreſſions of BODY AND BLOOD became NECESSARY: Theſe only, being fully declarative of the nature of the Feaſt.

On the whole, We have, indeed, no conception how divine Wiſdom could contrive a more natural, proper, and elegant way of acquainting his diſciples, that the Rite, now inſtituted, was of the nature of *a*

feaſt

SERM. X. *feaſt upon ſacrifice*, than by terming the elements of BREAD AND WINE communicated, his BODY AND BLOOD.

Thus doth the *preciſe idea* of this Rite, as here delivered, ſerve to remove a difficulty which hath long embarraſſed all the various Oppoſers of the doctrine of TRANSUBSTANTIATION; by ſhewing that the FIGURATIVE WORDS of the inſtitution are eaſy, natural, elegant, and neceſſary.

It likewiſe very well accounts for another difficulty, which the Advocates for a *real preſence* throw in the way of common ſenſe. They ſay, "If the words of the inſtitution were only metaphorical; and eſpecially, if the FIGURE was expreſſive of no more than a *death commemorated*, they might, and probably would, have been changed in the narratives, five times repeated, by the four Evangeliſts and St. Paul, in diſtinct Hiſtories, and on different occaſions. For that, no reaſon can be given of the unvaried uſe of the ſame words but becauſe they are to be underſtood LITERALLY: And then, being declarative of one of the greateſt myſteries in Religion, there was a neceſſity to record the *very terms*, whenever

ever the hiſtory of the inſtitution was re- SERM.
lated." X.

To this we reply, that indeed, were the words uſed FIGURATIVELY, and the *figure* only expreſſive of a *death commemorated*, as the learned Author of the PLAIN ACCOUNT ſuppoſes, it is reaſonable to think, the terms would have been varied, in one or other of the ſacred Writers: Becauſe, in ſuch a caſe, it is natural to believe, that Writers of ſo different genius and acquirements would not all have the ſame ſentiment concerning the *force* of theſe preciſe *terms*; ſo as to eſteem them preferable to any other: As, in fact, on this ſuppoſition, they would not be at all preferable. But we can by no means allow the conſequence, That therefore they are to be underſtood LITERALLY: Since, if we admit the inſtitution to be of the nature of *a feaſt upon ſacrifice*, as we have proved it is, there will be the ſame neceſſity for the unvaried uſe of the terms, altho' they are *figurative*, as there would be, altho' they were *literal*. For theſe preciſe terms are as neceſſary to denote *a Feaſt upon ſacrifice*, as to denote a *Sacrifice* it ſelf.

SERM. X.

Here too let me obſerve, both againſt our Catholic and Proteſtant Writer, that on this idea, of *a feaſt upon Sacrifice*, (which no one, I think, can doubt but the primitive Chriſtians had of the Lord's Supper) it would naturally follow, that Antiquity ſhould always ſpeak of this Rite in the ſtrongeſt terms of veneration; as that, thro' which, the higheſt benefits of our Religion, are conveyed. And this they might do, without much EXAGGERATION on the one hand; or any conception of a REAL PRESENCE on the other.

The learned Catholic Biſhop ſaith true, that Proteſtants have but lamely juſtified the FIGURE of, *This is my body*, &c. by thoſe other of, *I am the vine — I am the door*. And his reaſon is ſolid. *Jeſus*, ſaith he, *in the inſtitution of this Rite, was neither propounding a Parable, nor explaining an Allegory*. But when he would have us infer from hence, that there could be no other occaſion for ſuch a *figure*, he impoſes his uſual art upon us. He would not ſpeak out. He knew there were other occaſions; ſuch as in fact was the caſe here, namely, *The declaring the* NATURE *of a Rite*. But he would cut off our way to this, by ſuppoſing it to

to be allowed on all hands, That *the words are detached and ſeparate from all other diſcourſe — that there is no leading Preparation.* Now this, we have ſhewn, is abſolutely falſe. The *leading preparation* was a plain one: It was the PASCHAL SUPPER. The *preceding diſcourſe* was an affecting one: It was the mention of his approaching DEATH AND SUFFERINGS. Therefore, the words of the Inſtitution do not, as M. Boſſuet pretends, *carry their whole meaning within themſelves*; but refer to things preceeding and exterior. He trifles with us, when he challenges us to find a place in Scripture *where the* ſign *hath the name of the* thing ſignified, *given to it at the moment of the inſtitution of the Rite, and* WITHOUT ANY LEADING PREPARATION. We have ſhewn there was a *leading Preparation.* And that circumſtance proved, the Biſhop, I ſuppoſe, would retract his challenge. SERM. X.

In the mean time, his triumphant concluſion loſes much of it's Luſtre. — "That, "in a word, (ſays he) which I pretend to "evince is, the embarras into which the "words, *This is my body*, throws all the Pro-"teſtant party. For either we muſt confound "all

SERM. X.

" all the Myſteries of Religion, or elſe, give
" a reaſon why Jeſus hath not uſed theſe
" *forcible terms* in any of his Inſtitutions but
" that of the *laſt Supper*. If his *body and blood*
" are equally preſent, and as really received
" by the Faithful elſewhere, in the celebration
" of every other act of faith, there was no
" reaſon for chuſing theſe STRONG TERMS
" for the inſtitution of the *Euchariſt*, rather
" than for *Baptiſm*; and eternal Wiſdom
" would, in this caſe, have expreſſed it ſelf
" at random. This point I foretell ſhall be
" the eternal and inevitable confuſion of the
" Defenders of the *figurative ſenſe*[k]."

We ſee, this mighty difficulty, which is eternally to embarras the Defenders of the figurative ſenſe, is confeſſed to be at an end, on the diſcovery of one good reaſon, Why ſuch

[k] Car ou il faut embrouiller tous les Myſteres, ou il faut pouvoir rendre une raiſon pourquoi Jeſus Chriſt n'a parlé avec cette force que dans la cene. Si ſon corps et ſon ſang ſont auſſi préſens et auſſi reellement reçus par tout ailleurs, il n'y avoit aucune raiſon de choiſir ces *fortes paroles* pour l'Euchariſtie plutot que pour le Batême, et la ſageſſe eternelle auroit parlé en l'air. Cet endroit ſera l'éternelle et inevitable confuſion des Defenſeurs du *ſens figuré*. *Hiſtoire des Var.* Tom. i. p. 477, 8.

forcible

forcible terms are employed in the institution of the *laſt ſupper*, and not in *Baptiſm*, or in the other rites of our Religion. To put then the ſpeedieſt period to it, we need but to obſerve, That the laſt Supper, as a *feaſt after the ſacrifice*, referred to the *Sacrifice on the Croſs*, in which, the *body and blood* of Chriſt were offered for our redemption. Now, to deſign and indicate *ſuch* a feaſt by the *words* of the inſtitution, *the forcible terms* in queſtion were naturally, properly, nay *neceſſarily* employed. And the reaſoning which evinces this, evinces likewiſe that they were uſed in a *figurative ſenſe*. On the contrary, the initiatory Rite of *Baptiſm* referred to another Baptiſm already in uſe; in both of which the matter adminiſtered being *water*, an element at hand, it was rightly called, in the inſtitution of the Chriſtian Baptiſm, by it's proper name. But *fleſh and blood* being the things adminiſtered in the ancient *feaſts upon ſacrifice*, and they not being at hand at the inſtitution of the laſt Supper, the elements, ſubſtituted in their place, were, in an elegant converſion, called by the *improper*, and very *neceſſary* names of *body and blood*.

SERM. X.

To

SERM. X.

To illuſtrate this matter a little further.—It may be proper to obſerve, that another Rite, the Rite of *impoſition of hands*, for procuring the deſcent of the Holy Spirit, is called the BAPTISM OF FIRE: in which, both the terms are *figurative*; as, in the *Baptiſm of water*, both are *literal*. And why this difference? but becauſe the Agent or inſtrument employed in the latter caſe, being *ſpiritual*, there was need of figurative names, taken from material things, to aid the groſſneſs of our conception, concerning his manner of operation: But *material* things, at hand, as in the former caſe, needed no ſuch converſion of terms. So that all the myſtery in this affair, I mean ſo far forth as concerns the *terms* by which a religious Rite is inſtituted, is only this, That when the things are of a ſpiritual nature, as the gifts of the Spirit; or of a material nature, not yet *in eſſe*, as a ſacrifice not yet offered, and therefore needing another body to be ſubſtituted in it's place, There a neceſſity of employing *figurative* terms becomes apparent. But when the thing is a material ſubſtance; at hand, and actually employed, as water in Baptiſm, it would rather confound than aid our conceptions,

ceptions, to uſe improper, that is, figura- SERM. X.
tive terms.

Thus we ſee, how, by interpreting Scripture hiſtory on the common rules employed in the ſtudy of other ancient Writings, that is to ſay, having a ſpecial regard to the manners, cuſtoms, and opinions of thoſe Times, the true nature and genius of the laſt Supper is diſcovered; and the ſacred Inſtitution freed from the injuries to which theſe two extremes have long rendered it obnoxious.

But now I ſuppoſe the followers of either Syſtem will be ready to object; what the unbeliever will not be backward to ſecond; That it ſeems hard to imagine, that one of the moſt eſſential Rites of an univerſal Religion, deſigned for all times and places, ſhould ſtand in need of the cuſtoms and opinions of a particular age and country to explain it's nature and genius. For the conſequence of this would ſeem to be, the rendering it's nature precarious, and in courſe of time, obſcure, and unintelligible.

To which we reply, That many good ends may be diſcovered in this ordinance; and, therefore, many more may be reaſonably ſuppoſed.

SERM. X.

1. A Religion, however univerſal, when promulged in the manner, and propagated by the inſtruments, which God thought fit to employ when he gave us the Religion of his Son, muſt needs have many dependencies on the Times which ſaw it's riſe and progreſs.

2. As the *Chriſtian* Religion roſe upon the foundation, and became the completion of, the *Jewiſh*, it was very natural, and commodious, for ſeveral of it's parts to bear a fitting reference to That, on which it was erected; both to perpetuate it's *relation*, and to manifeſt it's *completion*. So that, on this account, ſuch a Religion, however univerſal, could not ſtand alone, or independent of every thing exterior.

3. This reference to the cuſtoms and opinions of the times, was further uſeful, by impreſſing on the Religion ſo circumſtanced, one indelible mark of *truth*, for the uſe of all ages. Had that Religion, pretending to have ariſen in remote antiquity, brought down with it no tincture of thoſe times, which ſaw it's birth and increaſe, we might have reaſon to ſuſpect the traditional accounts which informed us of it's high birth.

But

But when we find upon it ſo ſtrong a mark of ancientry; and impreſſed in a manner ſo *natural* as to cauſe no ſuſpicion; and in a manner ſo *ſure* as to afford no handle for Impoſture, we may be confident, that it is of the times it pretends to. Each Age hath it's character of manners, juſt as it hath it's character of ſtyle and writing; and as the Critics determine the date of a manuſcript from the turn of the phraſe, and the formation of the letters, ſo Divines ſettle the æra of a Religion by the relation it bears to contemporary cuſtoms and practices. But was the manuſcript compoſed in an *univerſal Character*, and did the Religion contain *only the bare principles* of natural Religion, delivered in the abſtract, they would both want one neceſſary mark to aſcertain their reſpective dates. SERM. X.

4. Again, This *peculiarity* objected to, ſerves a ſtill further, and greater end. It is contrived to be declarative of the TRUE NATURE of the death and ſufferings of Chriſt. That his death on the Croſs was a SACRIFICE for the ſins of the world had been always held part of the Catholic Faith; founded on the expreſs declarations of

SERM. X. Scripture. But thoſe Sects who oppoſe the doctrine of a REAL REDEMPTION, have always ſtriven to evade the notion of a real *ſacrifice*; as that on which the doctrine of *Redemption* is founded; upon pretence, that the ſcripture-expreſſions of Chriſt's *ſacrifice* were only figurative and alluſory. Now if the *laſt Supper*, the rite which commemorates the death of Chriſt, be of the nature of the *feaſts upon ſacrifice*, it is ſelf-evident that the death it ſelf was a REAL SACRIFICE, and not merely ſo called by converſion of terms, or accommodation of ideas.

5. As it was contrived to declare the real nature of Chriſt's death, ſo it likewiſe ſerved this further purpoſe, a purpoſe of great importance, to declare the ABOLITION OF SACRIFICES IN REVEALED RELIGION. For if in the moſt ſolemn act of Worſhip, where a *Sacrifice* always took place, a *commemoration only of a Sacrifice* is celebrated, it is plain, all ſacrificial rites are excluded that Religion: And, (if that Religion be the completion of the diſpenſation) conſequently, *aboliſhed*. The Sacrifice on the Croſs does, indeed, in it's nature, aboliſh all thoſe Jewiſh Sacrifices, which

which evidently prefigured it; but to be assured of the abolition of sacrifice in general, some more express declaration, like what we find in this significant Rite, seemed to be expedient. SERM. X.

6. But lastly, The very notion of an universal Religion, unrelated to, and unconnected with, the times in which it was first divulged, is, in truth, repugnant to common sense and the nature of things. This Religion, as the Objectors tell us, is designed for all times and places. Some good method therefore of conveying it to posterity, and perpetuating the conveyance, must be thought of and employed. There are but two means of human communication, ORAL TRADITION and WRITING. *Tradition* hath been ever found insufficient for the purposes of Truth and Religion; and incapable of securing either their purity or existence. The only method which remains, is by *Scripture*. And this being to be composed in the living language of the age in which the Revelation was given, some parts of it must, in course of time, grow obscure; as depending on the circumstances of the users, whose customs and

SERM. X.

manners give the ſhape and colouring to all their diſcourſe. So that, to underſtand the exact ſenſe of the terms, and the full energy of the phraſe, the cuſtoms and manners of the times, which faſhioned the words and ornamented the idiom of the language, muſt of neceſſity be diligently ſtudied, if we would arrive at any competent ſkill in the interpretation of ſuch writings. Now this circumſtance which makes the objection, reſulting from the very nature of things, we ſee how little force it hath againſt the truth of an univerſal Religion.

The concluſion from the whole is this, That we ſhould, with all ſubmiſſion, take God's Laws as he, in his wiſdom, hath been pleaſed to give them; and as the order and condition of things, by him eſtabliſhed, permits us to receive them.

Having now ſo largely enquired into the SPECIFIC NATURE of this holy Rite; we are enabled, in very few words, to ſhew, (which we propoſed, as the principal end of the Enquiry) what thoſe benefits are which we receive at the *Lord's Table*; and what the obligations are, which we lye under, of frequenting it.

Chriſt,

Chriſt, by the SACRIFICE of himſelf upon the croſs, purchaſed the *Redemption* of Mankind: And this Rite being by it's nature commemorative thereof, as it is *a feaſt upon Sacrifice*; each partaker receives, of conſequence, the ſeal of pardon, and of reſtoration to his loſt Inheritance. SERM. X.

But as this operates only on the terms of *repentance, and newneſs of life*, the gift would be defeated, by being beſtowed on a condition which our perverſe Nature ſo much oppoſes, was not this Nature ſoftened and ſubdued by the power of GRACE; that promiſed bleſſing, peculiar to the Goſpel-Diſpenſation. Now as the influence of the HOLY SPIRIT conſtitutes the moſt intimate COMMUNION OF GOD WITH MAN, What *time* can we conceive ſo highly ſanctified for the reception of it, as that in which we renew our *federal union* with our Lord and Maſter, in his *laſt Supper*; called by St. Paul, the *communion of his body and blood.*

This leads us to what only remains to be conſidered, *The Obligation to frequente communion:* and this obligation will be beſt underſtood, by conſidering the reaſons of an

SERM. X. Inſtitution which procures us ſo high a prerogative as *an union with the God of our Salvation.*

We are, by the Sacrament of BAPTISM, united, as members, to the MYSTICAL *Body of Chriſt*, his CHURCH. And ſince Church-memberſhip is not only an outward but a public, rather than a private thing, One ſingle adminiſtration of ſuch Rite is ſufficient to make that union, laſting.

But, by the Sacrament of the LORD'S SUPPER, we are united, as members, to the SPIRITUAL *Body of Chriſt*, his GRACE. This is an inward union, and a particular: and laſts no longer than the right diſpoſition of heart and affections ſhall continue: and this, by reaſon of our corrupt nature, and perpetual commerce with an evil world, being always impairing, it has always occaſion to be ſtrengthened and renewed. This, as we ſaid, is the office of the *Holy Spirit*; whoſe gracious influence more peculiarly ſanctifies that holy ſeaſon. Hence the uſe, and neceſſity of FREQUENTE COMMUNION; intimated in the words of the inſtitution, *Do this in remembrance of me*: Which imply, as we have ſhewn, more than *preſerving*

ſerving the memory of a dead benefactor; they imply, the *continuing to receive his benefaction*; which is conveyed to us, from time to time, and *as often as we ſhew forth the Lord's death till he come*. So true is the account given of this ſacred Rite in the ARTICLES of our Church, That *it is not only the badge or* TOKEN *of a Chriſtian man's profeſſion, but rather a certain and ſure witneſs and effectual ſign of Grace, and God's good will towards us*; by which he doth *work inviſibly in us, and doth not only quicken, but alſo* STRENGTHEN *and confirm our faith in him*[a]. SERM. X.

All this duly conſidered, we ſhall, I hope, endeavour to regain a proper veneration for this *holy Myſtery*; which hath of late been ſo fatally impaired, as by other liberties, ſo principally by the proſtitution of it to CIVIL PURPOSES; Not a proſtitution by the LEGISLATURE; but by thoſe licentious men, who, contenting themſelves with the obſervance of the form and *letter*, neglect the end and *ſpirit of the* LAW.

[a] Art. xxv.

SER-

SERMON XI.

Of Church Authority.

MATTH. xxiii. 9, 10.

Call no Man your FATHER *upon the Earth: for one is your Father which is in Heaven. Neither be ye called* MASTERS: *for one is your Maſter, even Chriſt.*

TO claim Rule or Maſtery in matters of Religion, on mere human Authority, ſhews ſo much impudence; and to acknowledge the claim, ſo egregious folly; that one could hardly conceive any man, who had been *delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God*, ſhould be in danger, either of aſſuming it himſelf, or ſub-

SERM. XI. ſubmitting to it when aſſumed by others. For what FATHER, doth common ſenſe bid us acknowledge, but him who *begot us through the Goſpel*; *our Father which is in Heaven:* Or what MASTER, but him who *viſited and redeemed his people*, even *Jeſus Chriſt the righteous.*

1. But this Government of God's Church under the *Goſpel*, not being adminiſtered, as under the *Law*, in PERSON, but by a WRITTEN RULE; the Miniſters of the *word*, under pretenſe of interpreting it, took occaſion to introduce their own authority; and on that, by inſenſible degrees, a very wicked Uſurpation. The buſineſs of interpreting was, at firſt, modeſtly aſſumed, as a mere act of *Charity*, to aſſiſt the brethren in the ſtudy of God's word. But the employment being commonly confined to a certain *Order*, this act of Charity ſoon grew into an office of Authority, which at laſt put the *Law* and the *Gloſs* upon an equal footing.

The Pretenſe for the exerciſe of this office, on which the Uſurpation took it's riſe, was the OBSCURITIES in ſacred Scripture. Unhappily, it was not underſtood,

that the *very Obſcurities themſelves* were a ſufficient evidence that the ſubject of them, could never be matter of faith neceſſary to ſalvation. What perhaps contributed to obſtruct ſo obvious a truth, was the great privileges aſcribed to *Chriſtian Faith.* So that men became more ſolicitous to have it large and full, than to have it pure, and perfect. SERM. XI.

2. The adminiſtration of Chriſt's Kingdom by a *written Word*, on his withdrawing bodily from his Church, gave another advance to this uſurped Authority, of a more public nature. It neceſſitated the Church to aſſume a form approaching to that of mere human Societies; in which, Rulers and Governors were ordained to keep the ſeveral members in ſubordination to the whole; which could be only done by inveſting ſuch Governors with a power to inforce a *common formula of Faith.* And tho' this was barely neceſſary to keep Society together; yet we ſee, how eaſily it might be abuſed, to introduce an uſurpation over Conſcience.

3. Hitherto we have conſidered the ſteps to this unjuſt dominion, condemned in my

SERM. XI.

my text, as they advanced from WITHIN the Lord's heritage: Others roſe from WITHOUT. For our *civil* as well as *ſpiritual* Governors have been equally diſpoſed to play the Tyrant over Conſcience; and, not rarely, have agreed to ſhare the Tyranny between them.

The *civil Magiſtrate*, the Apoſtle tells us, *is the miniſter of God to us for good*; that is, the means of procuring and preſerving theſe bleſſings, which our reaſonable nature, and the indulgence of providence, concur in enabling us to enjoy. In order to this end, the enforcement of the GREAT PRINCIPLES both of *common morality*, and of *natural religion*, fall under his Juriſdiction. Such of them, I mean, as are abſolutely neceſſary to form that fundamental bond of civil Society, OBEDIENCE FOR CONSCIENCE SAKE. But, under this pretenſe, the civil Magiſtrate hath frequently attempted to draw in the WHOLE of Religion into his Cognizance. And this uſurpation, many miſtakes concerning his Office, and the nature of civil Society, joining in with imaginary neceſſities of State, contributed to ſupport. He obſerved, that the

the *regal* and *ſacerdotal* character were of old, commonly united in the ſame perſon. And the particular reaſons of this conjunction not being conſidered, he imagined that what was only an accidental coalition, was a perpetual union. Again, he ſuppoſed civil Society, whoſe ſole end is the ſecurity of one certain kind of good, comprized in the temporal liberty and property of man, to be ordained, for the attainment of all poſſible good of every kind; which neceſſarily implied his care in, and juriſdiction over, Religion. Laſtly he concluded, that NECESSITY OF STATE required an Univerſal conformity to the *Religion of the Sovereign*. A *neceſſity* merely imaginary: for wherever religious TOLERATION is allowed, diverſities of ſects never affect the peace of civil Society. Indeed, when the Magiſtrate begins to violate the rights of Conſcience, then this *neceſſity* becomes real: but it is a neceſſity of his own making; it does not ariſe from the nature of things. Therefore the cauſe, which was in his own power to reform, he ſhould have reformed; rather than have ſought to remedy

SERM. XI.

SERM. XI.

remedy the effects by further injuſtice. He ſhould have taken-off that iniquitous reſtraint; which, in forcing to Church-conformity, by civil penalties, hath occaſioned the violation of the national peace; rather than, by additional penalties, to ſeek to regain that peace, in an univerſal conformity of mere outward profeſſion; under which, the power of Religion vaniſhes.

Such were the pretenſes of our ECCLESIASTICAL and CIVIL Governors, to *Maſtery* and Dominion in the *Lord's Inheritance:* From whence we may collect the care and tenderneſs of our bleſſed Maſter, in this early warning to his Followers againſt exerciſing, or ſubmitting to, this Antichriſtian Claim. *Call no man Father upon the Earth: for one is your Father which is in Heaven. Neither be ye called Maſters: for one is your Maſter, even Chriſt:* Which words plainly imply, that whoever requires religious Obedience, or a right over Conſcience, by his own Authority, is an Uſurper in another's Juriſdiction: and whoever pays obedience to ſuch a Claim, is a rebel to his lawful Maſter. For revealed Religion

gion coming immediately from God, the LAWGIVER, and the SUPREME MAGISTRATE are one and the ſame; and all Authority properly reſides in him. SERM. XI.

But Man's claim is not only unjuſt, and Man's ſubmiſſion to it ſinful; but they are both, in the higheſt degree, extravagant, and abſurd.

A juriſdiction in matters of Faith is what no human authority is capable of adminiſtring; as all human authority is ſubject to error and miſtake. This is ſo obvious an objection, that the Biſhop of *Rome*, who firſt ſet up this claim, or at leaſt, digeſted it unto a Syſtem, ſoon ſaw the neceſſity of ſupporting it on a pretended INFALLIBILITY. And tho' this was adding blaſphemy to uſurpation, yet it made the *Myſtery of Ungodlineſs* conſiſtent: and free, at leaſt, from the abſurdity of thoſe, who confeſs themſelves *fallible*; and yet exact the ſame ſubmiſſion to their Authority as if they could not err. Which of them is the moſt abſurd is eaſily underſtood; but which of them the moſt preſuming is hard to ſay: For if one intrenches upon Hea-

SERM. XI.

ven, the other ventures to inſult common ſenſe.

But the mere weakneſs of the underſtanding is not the only circumſtance that diſqualifies men for this authority over Conſcience. The prejudices, ariſing from the paſſions, make the unreaſonableneſs of implicit ſubmiſſion ſtill more apparent. The moſt ſpecious exerciſe of human Authority is doubtleſs in thoſe Aſſemblies called GENERAL COUNCILS. And yet every one, not an utter ſtranger to Church-hiſtory, muſt have learnt, that the ſame partialities mix themſelves in their concluſions, which miſlead *Civil Aſſemblies*. And, where is the wonder, if Churchmen, acting on an uſurped plan, ſhould deviate from the paths of *Faith* and *Charity*, when we every day ſee Stateſmen, in their proper office, miſtake the plainer road of Juſtice and the public Good.

One, therefore, *is our Father, which is in Heaven: One is our Maſter, even Chriſt.* And their Will, as announced to us in *Sacred* SCRIPTURE, is the *only Law*, to which Chriſtians, as ſuch, are held and obliged. On this Rock, where Chriſt built his Church, every

every private Man may ſafely repoſe his conſcience. To this truly infallible Guide, we may commit ourſelves with perfect confidence; in this aſſurance, that ſo much of God's Will as is neceſſary for us to know, is eaſy to be known; and that whatever is dark or difficult in his *Word*, is therefore not neceſſary to be known. SERM. XI.

But if human Authority hath uſurped upon Conſcience; there are not wanting thoſe who, on the other hand, have uſed Conſcience for a *cloke of maliciouſneſs*: and, on pretence of *one being our Father which is in Heaven*, have denied that Obedience to the CHURCH OF CHRIST, which, as a mere human Society it might claim; and which, on that very footing, Chriſt himſelf hath commanded us to pay unto it, where he directs his followers to *hear the Church* [a].

But Authority, which theſe words imply, is a mockery without ſubmiſſion and obedience. Hence the reaſonableneſs of ſubſcription to a *general formulary of Faith*; which the nature of Society makes neceſſary, in order to tie a number of particu-

[a] Matth. xviii. 17.

SERM. XI.

lars into one body. A bond, which may have its due efficacy without violating any of the rights of Conſcience: For all the juriſdiction which follows from it, is only this, that ſo long as any member of the Community profeſſeth that general *formulary*, which the end of Society requires, to admit him into Church-communion, he be obedient to ſuch Laws of his ſpiritual Governors, as concern DISCIPLINE: So far, the Authority of the Church, as a religious Society, extends; and no farther. For whenever a private Member of it can no longer, with a good conſcience, ſubſcribe to the *points of Doctrine* profeſſed; or conform to the *mode of worſhip* in practiſe; or ſubmit to the *rules of diſcipline* inforced, all that remains is expulſion, or Excommunication; but, unattended with opprobrious cenſures, civil incapacities, or corporal or pecuniary inflictions; in a word, with every conſequence that may injuriouſly affect the perſon, fortune, or reputation of the ejected Member.

II. But

II.

But to return now to my text. As the reaſon againſt *calling any one our Father upon the Earth*, is not founded in our own ſtrength, and our neighbour's weakneſs, but in the common infirmity of all; the other prohibition naturally follows, *that neither ſhould we affect to be called Maſters.* For if, purely to preſerve the rights of Conſcience, and to vindicate the Authority due to God's tribunal, we refuſe to acknowledge man's juriſdiction; with what face can we claim that for ourſelves, which we have denied to all others. SERM. XI.

And yet it is a melancholy truth, that when the great ſeparation was made from POPERY, on this very principle, that it had uſurped the titles of FATHER and LORD, due only to God and his Son; Thoſe holy Men, who were obedient to the *warning voice*, which called them out of *Babylon*, were too apt to forget the condition, on which only, they had a right to vindicate their Chriſtian liberty from the dominion of a MASTER; which was, the not pretending to MASTERSHIP themſelves.

SERM. XI.

The ſpirit of Dominion ſoon betrayed itſelf in theſe newly manumiſed Churches of God: Firſt, by too unreaſonably narrowing the bottom of Church-communion; and then, by perſecuting of thoſe whoſe Conſciences would not ſuffer them to ſubſcribe to their terms. So that the ſimple, uniform GOSPEL FAITH, on which the proteſtant Churches were profeſſedly founded, ſoon became broken into Sects and Conventicles: And every defenſeleſs Party, which had moſt ſuffered for opinions, no ſooner got Civil Power on their ſide, than they returned the injuſtice with double injury. For Perſecution, tho' it may ſtrengthen and improve our Faith, doth not ſo eaſily enlarge our Charity.

It hath been offered in excuſe for this behaviour of the Proteſtant Churches, on their ſeparation from the Church of *Rome*, (for, their perſeverance in it afterwards, will admit of no apology) that the SPIRIT OF PERSECUTION hath a marvellous malignity in it's nature, above all other errors, to corrupt and deprave the human mind. So that when every other Iniquity of Papal power had been now detected and expelled; this

ſtill

ſtill ſkulked behind, within the cloſe re- SERM.
ceſſes of the heart; and, as often as it could XI.
diſguiſe it's deformity under a zeal for the
work of Reformation, was ready to ſtep out
again and play the Devil.

This is not to be wondered at. There is ſcarce a material error in the CHURCH OF ROME, which doth not ſooth and cheriſh ſome or other of our corrupt paſſions and prejudices: but PERSECUTION regales them all: It flatters our SPIRITUAL PRIDE, the vanity of ſuperior knowledge, and a purer faith: It confirms our BIGOTRY, the miſtaken zeal for the honour of God and holy Church; and it ſupports our AMBITION, the itch for *Maſtery*, and miſrule. Were it not for ſo powerful a bias, this Iniquity, which had moſt imbittered their thraldom, and kept them longeſt in their chains, muſt, on their firſt deliverance, have been immediately detected, and marked out for execration.

It is true, however, there was another accident, which found buſineſs for this *Fury*, when once it had got harbour in the fair boſom of the reformed Churches. The Proteſtant profeſſion was founded on the prin-

SERM. XI. ciple of FREE INQUIRY, and the liberty of private judgment. But as it is rare for men not to abuſe a long ſequeſtered privilege, when new recovered, by puſhing the exerciſe of it, to an extreme; ſo it happened in the *work of reformation.* Several curious fancies grew up with the ſimple Faith of that *Goſpel*, from whence the Reformed, in general, ſought their knowledge of God's will. And they being, through their long inexperience, as unknowing in the real nature of Church-communion, as inattentive to the ſimplicity of Chriſtian-faith, through deſertion of their Guide; theſe fancies, harmleſs, indeed, while held indifferent, were, by their fond inventors, ſoon made important, and the terms of Fellow-memberſhip. The effect was fatal: It ſerved to rend the Reformation into various Sects and Parties. We may be ſure, the Church of *Rome* would take advantage of this miſcarriage. They did ſo: and upbraided the *work of Reformation* with being conducted by a Spirit of confuſion: They inferred, that when men had once left the *centre of unity*, and would ſeek truth by a *liberty of thinking*, which authorized private judgment, there would ſoon be as

as many falſe opinions as free Inquirers: And as many Sects as both. The Reformed ſeemed ſenſible of this opprobrium: But it being ſuppoſed impracticable to go back to the ſimplicity of the *Goſpel-faith*; and on that ſimplicity, to regulate the terms of Church-communion; they contented themſelves with ſtopping where they were; which they thought they ſhould be able to do, by applying unjuſt coercion to all ſuch novelties, as, either by their ſubtilty or plauſibility, promiſed the birth of a *new ſect*, or by their groſſneſs and extravagance, reflected diſhonour upon *Reformation* itſelf. SERM. XI.

To proceed. This Error was not more diſgraceful to the *beginnings* of *Reformation*, than fatal to the *progreſs* of it.

It hath, indeed, been obſerved, and perhaps with truth, that the reſtraint of religious liberty hath made men more eager to exert and exerciſe the right of thinking for themſelves. But this was accidental; when, after a long and indolent reſignation of the underſtanding to authority, ſome caſual perſecution of a new opinion had ſerved, as a ſtimulus, to quicken the benumbed faculties of Reaſon. And even then, the benefit

SERM. XI. fit was much allayed by the ſmall helps which ſuch times afford to the diſcovery of truth; and the great danger there is in uſing ſuch as may be had: Hence it was, that during the twilight of dawning Science, men, the beſt intentioned, and naturally the beſt qualified, did, in ſtruggling to get free, advance ſuch crude and haſty concluſions, as greatly diſcredited that *Goſpel-liberty*, they were then labouring to promote. Of this we have many unhappy examples in the firſt efforts towards Reformation.

But the iſſue would be very different in different circumſtances; in ſuch eſpecially where the Spirit of Liberty had done it's general work; and had eſtabliſhed the few great principles of Goſpel-truth, and purity. If, amongſt theſe, the antichriſtian diſcipline of reſtraint ſhould be received, adieu to all further advances in Reformation. Coercive power would from henceforth keep it for ever tied down to that imperfect ſtate, in which Church Authority had found it. For, in this caſe, the *reverence* paid to the new Authority, under which particulars had ſheltered themſelves from an old Tyranny, would concur with it's

it's *power*, to depreſs and diſcredit private Judgment. SERM. XI.

Nor would this prove a ſlight or trivial evil. For we are not to think the work of Reformation could be perfected at once. Thoſe who know, in general, what prejudices old habits impreſs on the moſt vigorous mind, even while enlarging itſelf by Liberty; and thoſe who know in particular, how haſtily and ſometimes how tumultuarily the Reformation was brought about, will eaſily underſtand, that the whole Goſpel Regimen was not likely to be reſtored together: and that ſuch a perfect recovery required time and leiſure to ſtudy; and freedom to profit by our ſtudies, in *the Word of God*.

But ſtill further. Did perſecuting Churches diſcourage private judgment in order to take the matter into their own hands, that *Truth* might have the ſanction of Authority, and they themſelves the honour of doing it further ſervice, ſomething might be ſaid, perhaps, in excuſe for this proceeding. But, alas! their infringement of religious liberty ariſes from a different principle. They diſcourage private inqui-

SERM. XI.

ry, not becauſe it is carrying on by better hands, but becauſe there needs no inquiry to be made: The work of Reformation, they ſay, is already perfected; and the duty of particulars is now to acquieſce. A ſtrange concluſion, which, the practiſe of unjuſt reſtraint, indeed, hath made familiar, but is, in itſelf, a very indecent preſumption. For, as a Proteſtant Church claims no INFALLIBILITY like the Church of *Rome*, nor immediate INSPIRATION like fanatic Sectaries, it muſt needs confeſs itſelf obnoxious to error: and from the unfavourable circumſtances ſpoken of before, very likely to fall into it. And then, whatever miſtakes it had committed through the condition of humanity, it might, from time to time, have redreſſed with good grace, on the modeſt principles of Reformation. This was an advantage which *infallible* and *inſpired* Pretenders had, by their knavery and folly, put for ever out of their power. But reſtraint and perſecution deprived the reformed Churches of this advantage: For when once they were in the train of implicite ſubmiſſion, they grew aſhamed to own they had any errors; and with reaſon; for

for what could more expoſe the criminal abſurdity of ſuch proceeding? Therefore, whenever the force of Truth had worked a change in the general principles of a Proteſtant Church, as it did more than once in the matter of *calviniſtical predeſtination*, men had rarely the courage to confeſs it. Which made one of their enemies obſerve, with a ſneer, *That it was allowable for the* New Reform *to change: but not avow the change* [a].

SERM. XI.

There is yet another miſchief behind, which is ſtill more general; I mean, that of Schiſms, diviſions, and increaſe of Sects and parties. For tho', as hath been obſerved, the effect of Perſecution, in theſe circumſtances, is to ſtifle Truth; yet it gives life and vigour to a thouſand Counterfeits. For, that thorough diſcipline of uniformity, which brings all to one dead level in the *Church of Rome*, is utterly impracticable in the *Churches of the Reformed*. Proteſtant Rulers, indeed, may, by *ſtirring up* the humours, elude and prevaricate with, their own principles; but

[a] Il eſt bien permis de changer dans la nouvelle reforme, mais il n'eſt pas permis d'avouer qu'on change. *Boſſuet Var.* V. i. p. 405.

it

SERM. XI.

it is impoſſible they ſhould ever go ſo far as to be able to put in practiſe the principle of their capital enemy: And yet there is no other that hath force enough to *expel* thoſe humours. Now altho' the *miſchief to the State* from various ſects and parties, may be reaſonably well amended by a juſt TOLERATION, afforded to ſuch, whom the Church, from the narrowneſs of its communion, ejects; yet the *miſchief to Religion* ſtill remains. The Object of Civil Government is PEACE; and this, a *toleration* ſecures: But the object of Religion is TRUTH; and this a diverſity of Sects, ariſing from the cauſe in queſtion, will always diſcredit. So that, in this ſenſe, SCHISM is a real and irremediable evil, which no Civil-prudence can palliate or cure: and which nothing but the Church, by widening it's Communion, can prevent or remove.

Thus have I endeavoured to explain the equity and wiſdom of my text. I have pointed out the good which follows from the obſervance, and the evils which ariſe from the violation, of the precept.

What remains is only to caution you from ſuffering the ABUSES here expoſed, (and

(and now, ABUSES are become the favou- SERM. rite topic of declamation [b], and the faſhion- XI. able motive for diſbelief) let not this, I ſay, prejudice you either againſt the REFORMATION in particular, or againſt the CHRISTIAN RELIGION in general.

Thoſe Communities, and Bodies of Men, who made the firſt ſeceſſion from the *Church of Rome*, did it, amongſt other cauſes, to avoid the *profeſſion* of thoſe *errors*, and the *practice* of thoſe *ſuperſtitions*, which that antichriſtian power tyrannically inforced upon Conſcience. The meaſure was evidently right. And if they narrowed their juſtification on that partial principle, *that their opinions were true, and their adverſaries' falſe*, inſtead of carrying it to that genuine and more generous ground, *That Chriſtian Liberty gives every man a right to worſhip God according to his Conſcience*; and conſequently, by ſo doing, laid the ſeeds of unjuſt reſtraint; this is no more to be admired, where no inſpiration is pretended, than that, in *Civil matters*, men

[b] See Lord *Bolingbroke's* poſthumous Volumes, whoſe reaſoning, ſuch as it is, proceeds, from one end to the other, on this ſingle topic.

ſhould

SERM. XI.

ſhould labour to promote the general good on erroneous or miſtaken Principles. Many of the Chief Inſtruments of our deliverance from Popery and arbitrary Power, by the late happy *Revolution*, proceeded, we know, in their accompliſhment of that glorious work, on maxims, which controverted the true origine of Government, and were unfriendly to the benefits it procures. Yet what honeſt man doth not rank them amongſt the favoured Servants of Providence, employed in the advancement of a general Good? Why then ſhould the *work of Reformation* be more hardly thought of, becauſe the Inſtruments of Chriſtian Liberty were not more dextrous in diſengaging themſelves from inveterate prejudices, than the Inſtruments of Civil Liberty. We muſt aſſign both events to the particular providence of God; or give them both up to the direction of Fate and Fortune. We muſt either be content to join the Character of Proteſtant to that of Patriot, or we muſt throw them both off, together.

As little ought thoſe unjuſt meaſures to prejudice us againſt the *Goſpel in general*: which was ſo far from leading *Men* into them,

them, or encouraging *Churches* to perſevere in them, that the genius of the Diſpenſation is manifeſtly violated thereby. SERM. XI.

The ſum of all is this, that if we would not diſhonour our FATHER, and his Son Jeſus, our MASTER; nor give Scandal to the good, nor a handle of blaſphemy to the bad, we ſhould no longer elude this great Commandment; but obey it in that candour and ingenuity, in which it was delivered. To *call no Man Father upon Earth, becauſe one is our Father in Heaven*; nor aſpire *ourſelves to be called Maſter, becauſe one is our Maſter even Chriſt.*

SERMON XII.

Of Church Authority.

MATTH. xxiii. 2, 3.

The SCRIBES *and* PHARISEES *ſit in Moſes's Seat. All, therefore, whatſoever they bid you obſerve, That obſerve and do: but do not ye after their works: for they ſay and do not.*

THE SCRIBES and PHARISEES, the public Teachers of the LAW, were now fallen into that depravity of manners, which the *Law* had foretold and condemned; and conſequently, ſunk into that general neglect, which is ever the lot of profligate Inſtructers, whether ſet over us by civil or divine Appointment. SERM. XII.

SERM. XII.

An Impoſtor, who had a *new* Syſtem to introduce, upon the *eſtabliſhed*, thus ſhaken by the corrupt morals of its Teachers, would certainly have improved ſo favourable a circumſtance, by inflaming the general averſion againſt thoſe who moſt ſtood in his way. But the *Son of God* declined this advantage: on the contrary, he reproved this popular prejudice, tho' ſo friendly to his own Miſſion; and endeavoured to reconcile them to their Teachers, his inveterate Enemies, on ſuch rational principles as beſt affirmed the Peoples' Obedience, and their Directors' Authority. Secure in his own Virtue he rejected the obliquities of human Policy: and, in order to rectify the error on which the miſchiefs of a deſpiſed authority ſubſiſt, He inſtructs his hearers to diſtinguiſh between the *public* and *private* Character of the Teacher. He ſhews them that tho' Men, who *ſay and do not*, ſhould never be followed for EXAMPLES; yet, that Miniſters of Religion, who *ſit in Moſes's chair*, and are inveſted with authority to teach the *Law*, are to be attended to as INSTRUCTORS, when, in their office, they denounce and inforce the

the ordinances of God. Nothing appears more reaſonable than this diſtinction. SERM. XII.

And yet in another place of the ſame Evangeliſt, our Holy Maſter ſeems to inſinuate a very different doctrine. "BE-"WARE (ſays he) of falſe Prophets, which "come to you in Sheep's cloathing, but "inwardly they are ravening Wolves. Ye "ſhall know them by their fruits. Do "men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of "thiſtles? Even ſo every good tree bring-"eth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree "bringeth forth evil fruit. Wherefore by "their fruits ye ſhall know them[c]."

Here, we ſee, it is expreſsly ſaid, That they whoſe morals do not correſpond to the purity of their doctrine ſhall have no regard or obſervance paid unto them; but, ſhall be ſhunned and avoided as deceivers; becauſe the corruption of their manners is a ſufficient proof of the impoſture of their pretences. *Beware of falſe Prophets—Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thiſtles?* On the other hand, our text inſtructs us to reverence the immoral Teacher;

[c] Matth. vii. 15, 20.

SERM. XII.

and to ſeparate his manners from his Doctrine. *All whatſoever they bid you obſerve, That obſerve and do: but do not ye after their works.*

To reconcile theſe two places of Scripture, it will be ſufficient to obſerve, That very different Perſons and Characters are the ſubjects of theſe two different directions.

They of my Text were an Order of ESTABLISHED TEACHERS; with whom the cuſtody of God's Word was intruſted; to be diſpenſed on all occaſions to the People. Theſe Men had groſsly *abuſed* indeed, but yet, not *forfeited* their truſt; and therefore it was the part of every good Citizen to ſupport them in their Character. And tho' the *Jewiſh Oeconomy* was now near the eve of it's diſſolution; when part was to be aboliſhed, part to be reformed, and the remaining part to be compleated, by the laſt Revelation of God's Will, intruſted to his Son; Yet the dignity of Truth, and the eminence of that Perſon who came to bring Truth into the world, required, that the intereſts even of an

an expiring Diſpenſation ſhould not be neglected. SERM. XII.

But the FALSE PROPHETS, mentioned in the other Scripture, *who come in Sheep's cloathing, but with wolfiſh diſpoſitions*, and therefore to be ſhunned and avoided as deceivers, are ſuch as aſſume a very different character. The character of God's extraordinary Meſſengers, intruſted with the delivery of a *new Revelation* to mankind. For, about this time the expectation of the promiſed Meſſiah, was very general. So that ſelfiſh and ambitious men were encouraged to perſonate his Character. Tho' the marks, by which they are deſcribed, might, one would think, have prevented the miſchiefs the deluſions drew upon this infatuated People.

Having now ſeen the perfect agreement of the different rules delivered in theſe two Scriptures; Let us enquire into the *reaſons* of them.

In the caution againſt *falſe Prophets* it is directed, that, in caſe the morals of a pretended Meſſenger from God be inconſiſtent with his Office, we ſhould ſhun and avoid him as a cheat. And ſurely with

SERM. XII.

much reaſon. The very nature of things informing us, that, when God thinks fit to reveal his Will, in an extraordinary way, to man, he will not diſgrace his diſpenſation by an unworthy Inſtrument. Both the *dignity* and the *intereſts* of Religion require, that the firſt bearer of it ſhould be thoroughly poſſeſſed of that power of virtue which true Religion beſtows.

It is highly abſurd to fancy, that ſo bright an emanation from the ſource of Light and Purity, as *divine grace and favour*, ſhould be conveyed to us through unclean and polluted hands. Neither would the Author of good endure the near approach and intercourſe of ſuch an Agent; neither could the good, he beſtows, be ſo conveyed, without ſtain and defilement.

The intereſts of Religion will not ſuffer ſo impure a conveyance. In propagating a new Religion, there are many corrupt prejudices to overcome. To ſee therefore the Meſſenger of God untouched with the importance of his high commiſſion, and unrenewed himſelf with the renovation he conveys to others, would afford thoſe prejudices too much aid and aſſiſtance.

But,

But, this ſanctity of manners, which is ſo expedient to ſupport the honour and intereſts of the miſſion, is indeed the natural and inſeparable attendant on the Office. For, in the promulgation of a new Religion, beſides thoſe marks of truth ariſing from the reaſonableneſs and purity of the doctrine, which ſhew it worthy of God; to prove it actually came from him there is need of certain *miraculous gifts*, which the Holy Spirit imparts to thoſe with whom he then condeſcends to dwell. But the peculiar office of the Holy Spirit is the *Sanctification of the heart*. SERM. XII.

From all this, we muſt conclude, that, when our bleſſed Maſter warns us to reject all ſuch for Impoſtors who pretend to an extraordinary commiſſion from God, with morals unſuitable to their meſſage, he doth it upon the beſt grounds of truth and expediency.

But now we muſt be careful to obſerve, that the caſe of *ſuch* is very different from theirs, whom God, in the ordinary courſe of his providence, raiſeth up, from time to time, as the bare Inſtruments of a REFORMATION in Religion; and who pre-

SERM. XII.

pretend to no higher character: Of whoſe agency, Providence avails itſelf to free an old eſtabliſhed Religion from the errors contracted thro' length of time and the malice of men. Here, the ſame concluſion will not hold; moſt of thoſe circumſtances being wanting which made the *inconſiſtency* between the public and private Character of the *extraordinary Agent:* And God, now adminiſtring the affairs of his Church by the ſettled Oeconomy of his common Providence, may ſometimes be well ſuppoſed to do here, as in the reſt of his moral diſpenſations, to *produce good out of evil*; to uſe wicked Inſtruments, in the natural courſe of things, to promote the ends of virtue; and make the oblique intereſts of the world ſerve to advance the honour, and to reſtore the purity of his Laws.

Of this different conduct the Jewiſh Hiſtory affords us an example. When God, at various periods, revealed his Will to particular families, and to his choſen people; the agents and meſſengers, whom he honoured with his commands, were ſelected from the moſt virtuous amongſt men;

men; ſuch as NOAH, ABRAHAM, and MOSES. But when, during the eſtabliſhed order of things, he decreed in the courſe of his providence, either to execute vengeance on the oppreſſors of *his People*; to purge the holy land from *Idolatry*; or to puniſh the tranſgreſſors of the *Law*; he frequently employed the agency of wicked kings and rulers, to bring his judgments to their purpoſed iſſue. But we need not wonder at this deſignation, when we ſee Providence did not diſdain to employ the like imperfect Inſtruments in a work that approached ſtill nearer to the dignity of the firſt operation of divine Love; I mean the ESTABLISHMENT of Religion: of which, that of the *Law* was committed to DAVID, and that of the *Goſpel*, to CONSTANTINE. SERM. XII.

This, our Adverſaries of the *Church of Rome*, do not ſufficiently conſider[d], when

[d] The celebrated M. Boſſuet ſays, — M. Burnet prend beaucoup de peine à entaſſer des exemples de Princes tres-déreglés dont Dieu s'eſt ſervi pour de grans ouvrages. Qui en doute? Mais—montrera-t-il un ſeul exemple où Dieu voulant REVELER aux hommes quelque verité importante et inconnuë durant

with

SERM. XII.

with ſo much triumph againſt the work of *Reformation*, they object to us thoſe impure

tant de ſiecles, pour ne pas dire entierement inouie, ait choiſi un Roi auſſi ſcandaleux que Henri VIII. et un Evêque auſſi lâche et auſſi corrumpu que Cranmer? *Hiſt. des Var.* L. VIII. Tom. I. p. 349, 8vo. Here the learned Writer plainly confounds the two different Characters diſtinguiſhed above. The Inſtruments of *Reformation* pretended to no agency or commiſſion from God, to REVEAL any thing to Man. And if they diſcovered an *important truth which had lain hid for many ages*, it was by laying open the *Scriptures* to the inſpection of all men; after they had been ſo long locked up from the vulgar, in the learned languages.—But he goes on—Si le Schiſme de l'Angleterre, ſi la reformation Anglicane eſt un ouvrage divin, rien n'y ſera plus divin que la PRIMAUTE' Eccleſiaſtique du Roi, puiſque ce n'eſt pas ſeulement par là que la rupture avec Rome, c'eſt-a-dire, ſelon les Proteſtans, le fondement neceſſaire de toute bonne reforme, a commencé, mais que c'eſt encore le ſeul point où l'on n'a jamais varie depuis le Schiſme. *Id ib.* Now, tho' I take the SUPREMACY of the Magiſtrate to be a *divine work*, in the ſenſe that all civil Inſtitutions, founded on the principles of Equity and Juſtice, are the *ordinance* of God [Rom. xiii. 2.] yet it is not pretended to be a *divine work* (as the learned writer puts it) in conſequence of it's being an eſtabliſhment introduced by the Inſtruments of *Reformation*: becauſe the Character of *ſuch Inſtruments* is very different from

Inſtru-

Inſtruments, who had neither motives nor manners ſuitable to the truth or purity of

that of an *inſpired Agent*, ſent immediately from God, to reveal his will to mankind; into whoſe Meſſage nothing merely human can inſinuate itſelf under the form of a divine inſtitution. The *Reformation*, it ſelf, which theſe *Inſtruments* have eſtabliſhed, will likewiſe, partake of the imperfections of the Founders. So that the *continuance* of an error no more impeacheth the providence of ſuch a work than the *introduction* of it. But we will ſuppoſe the Magiſtrate's ſupremacy to be as anti-chriſtian as this learned Prelate would repreſent it, and then apply his argument to one who was confeſſedly ſuch an Inſtrument for the reformation of God's Church, I mean JEHU; to whom God himſelf ſpeaks in this manner — "And the "Lord ſaid unto Jehu, Becauſe thou haſt done well "in executing that which was right in mine eyes, "and haſt done unto the Houſe of Ahab *according to* "*all that was in my heart.*" —— 2 Kings x. 30. Here we have an *Inſtrument of God*, in all it's forms. Let us put *him* then into the Biſhop's argument, inſtead of *Hen.* VIII. and ſee how it will ſadge. "If Jehu's deſtroying BAAL [the POPE] *out of Iſrael*, was a *divine work*; nothing could be *more divine* than his eſtabliſhing the GOLDEN CALVES [the King's SUPREMACY] *in Bethel and in Dan.* ℣. 28—29." I leave it to the advocates of the Church of Rome to find out a diſtinction by which their Champions argument will be made to conclude

that

SERM. XII. that *Goſpel Faith* which they pretended to reſtore. We are ſo far from being aſhamed of receiving benefit from men, who ſupply theſe circumſtances of reproach to themſelves, that, ſupported by the general principle, ariſing from the Doctrines of theſe two Texts, as here reconciled and explained, we find, in the perverſity of Man, new matter of *Glory to God.* And we bleſs the hand, which turned the Avarice of a furious Friar, and the luxury of a debauched Monarch, from their natural miſchiefs, to become Inſtruments of the choiceſt bleſſings; the recovery of LETTERS and the reſtoration of RELIGION.

Indeed, it would be hard to conceive a reaſon, why this kind of Diſpenſation ſhould not be eſteemed as adorable in the religious government of the world, as it is in the moral; where we ſee, and without heſitation acknowledge, the goodneſs, the power, and the wiſdom of God: whoſe Providence is inceſſantly employed in turning the crimes and paſſions of ſelfiſh men, to the ad-

for *Jehu's* Reformation, and at the ſame time, againſt that of *Henry* VIII.

vancement

vancement of public Juſtice. How ma- SERM.
ny wholeſome Laws have had their birth XII.
from the oblique views of intereſted *Mi-*
niſters! How many ſalutary inforcements
of them from the blind paſſions of diſap-
pointed *Factions!*

Indeed, if we ſhould ſo far miſtake, or, rather, abuſe theſe bleſſings, as to turn our gratitude, or repoſe our truſt, upon the Inſtruments, inſtead of the Sovereign Hand which guided them, Their vileneſs might then be fairly objected to us: But while we are careful to give the honour where it is due, none of that juſt reproach, which may fall upon the Inſtrument, will at all affect the glorious work it was employed to produce [e].

[e] Yet this ſophiſm, miſerable as it is, is the favorite argument both of SUPERSTITION and INFIDELITY: and conſtantly employed to diſcredit that Providence by which the work of *Reformation* was effected. The firſt ſtep to the ruin of that unhappy Monarch, whoſe bigoted poſterity has ſo often diſturbed and endangered our civil peace, was the being perverted by this very deluſion. *Father Orleans* tells the ſtory from his own mouth.—Ce fut à Bruxelles au ſortir de France qu'

So

SERM. XII.

So far, as to the reaſonableneſs of the caution againſt *falſe Prophets*. But now,

ayant aſſez de temps pour lire, il tomba ſur l' Hiſtoire d' *Heylin*. Il la lut avec attention, et au travers des divers pretextes dont les Proteſtants s' efforcent de colorér le ſchiſme de leur plays, il reconnut evidemment que cette ſeparation, ſi contraire à la maxime d'unité, qui eſt le fondement de l'Egliſe, etoit en effet l'ouvrage des paſſions humaines; que l' *incontinence* d' Henri VIII. l' *ambition* du Duc de Somerſet, la *politique* de la Reine Elizabeth, l' *avarice* de ceux qui d'abord s'etoient emparez des biens Eccleſiaſtiques, avoient été les principes de ce changement; que l'eſprit de Dieu n'y avoit point de part. Il ſavoit que Dieu s'etoit ſervi de PROPHETES d'une vie ſainte, pour être les chefs de ſon Peuple toutes les fois qu'il s'etoit agi de leur intimer ſes volontez touchant la Religion; que dans le changement de Loi, des APOTSRES revêtus de la vertu d'enhaut, et plus ſemblables aux Anges qu'aux autres hommes, avoient annoncé l'Evangile; que *dans les relachemens* arrivez dans l'un et dans l'autre Teſtament, *ce n'etoient point des hommes charnels*, des ames vindicatives, des eſprits ambitieux, qui avoient prêché la reforme, mais des *hommes pleins de l'eſprit de Moyſe, ou de celui de Jeſus-Chriſt*, ſeuls canaux dignes de récevoir les eaux qui coulent de ſes vives ſources pour ne les point rendre ſuſpectes de s'être corrompuës en venant à nous.—I hardly need ſtop to obſerve, that the ſophiſtry and falſe reaſoning

as

as to the reſpect due to *immoral Miniſters*, or the appointed Teachers of eſtabliſhed SERM. XII.

of all this has been expoſed above, in the *diſtinction*, laid down, between an *ordinary Inſtrument* and an *inſpired Agent* — He goes on — Des reflections ſi raiſonnables ouvrirent les yeux au Duc d' York: des lors il fut Catholique dans l'ame; et ce fut dans cette diſpoſition d'eſprit qu'au temps du retabliſſement il repaſſa en Angleterre——La Ducheſſe d' York, par un evenement remarquable, fut convertie en liſant le même Livre, qui avoit converti le Duc. *Hiſt. des Revol. d' Angleterre, Tom.* iii. What the *Prieſt* thus urges with the cunning of a Stateſman, to diſcredit the Proteſtant Religion; the *Politician* employs with the zeal of a Miſſionary, to decry Revelation in general. "With the ſame impartial eye, (ſays L. Bo-" lingbroke to his noble Friend) that your Lordſhip " ſurveys the abuſes of Religion, and the corruptions " of the Church, as well as Court, of Rome, which " brought on the *Reformation* at this period; you " will obſerve the *Characters* and *Conduct* of thoſe who " began, who propagated, and who favoured the *Re-" formation*: and from your obſervation of theſe, as " well as of the *unſyſtematical manner* in which it " was carried on, at the ſame time, in various places, " and of the want of concert, nay even of *Charity*, " amongſt the Reformers, *you will learn what to think " of the ſeveral Religions*, that unite in their oppoſition " to the Roman, and yet hate one another moſt " heartily; *what to think of the* ſeveral ſects, that

SERM. XII.

Religion, who lye under the ſame imputation of diſcrediting their doctrine by their practice, we ſhall ſhew their caſe to be very different; and conſequently that the different reception which my text directs us to afford them, is equally reaſonable.

Whatſoever (ſays the text) *they bid you obſerve, that obſerve and do: but do you not after their Works, for they ſay and do not.* That is, "As they are appointed to diſpenſe unto you the doctrines and precepts of Religion, and to ſupport and inforce them, with all the power of their wit and eloquence, attend to them, as to a public Character, with reverence; but ſhun their ways, and forbear to imitate their practice, which ſtands condemned by their own contrary profeſſions. In a word, receive them for your *Inſtructors*; but beware of taking them for your *Examples*."

The fitneſs and reaſonableneſs of this direction may be ſeen, both from the NECESSITY and the NATURE of the office.

"have ſprouted, like ſuckers, from the ſame great "Roots; and *what the true principles are of proteſtant* "*Eccleſiaſtical Policy*."—L. Bolingbroke, Letter VI. *of the ſtudy of Hiſtory*, Vol. i. p. 209—10.

1. We

1. We learn from the experience of all ages, that, to preſerve Religion amongſt the people, there is need of public teachers, to be ſet apart for that purpoſe. Thus in the *Jewiſh ſtate* they were appointed by God's particular direction: amongſt the policied nations of *Paganiſm*, by the civil magiſtrate: and wherever *our holy Religion* hath got footing, both divine and human authority have concurred to their eſtabliſhment. The office therefore of the Miniſters of a national Religion, like ours, is to ſupport and cultivate that *Revelation*, which the firſt Meſſengers of it, by their extraordinary graces, had planted and diſſeminated throughout the world. For it's divinity being *once* thus powerfully evinced, all that remained for the conſtant exerciſe of the miniſtry was to have the *exterior* evidence of it's *truth*, and the *interior* evidence of it's *excellence*, ſet in the faireſt and moſt convincing light. And as this might be done by the common aids of *reaſon* and *grace*, the power of *miracles*, as no longer neceſſary, was withdrawn from the Teachers of Religion. So that it was now no matter of wonder, tho' it will always be of SERM. XII.

SERM. XII. ſcandal, if men, equally ſubject with their hearers to the common infirmities of their nature, ſhould, in more degenerate times, fall under the ſame vaſſalage to ſin and corruption. However, that this will not excuſe their hearers from rejecting their miniſtry, and diſregarding their doctrine, appears plainly from the ſecond conſideration, the *nature* of their office.

2. Whoever aſſumes to inſtruct and direct the People, upon the footing of his own authority, hath need to be irreproachable in his life and converſation; becauſe the truth of what he delivers reſts upon the integrity of his character. Fraudulent and corrupt manners very juſtly diſcredit all he would recommend. And, tho' his prevarication cannot alter the nature of things, yet it ſeems to acquit his hearers for their neglect of him; and for declining to examine what he delivers on his own perſonal authority. This was the caſe of the ancient PHILOSOPHERS. While the firſt of them practiſed the virtues ſuitable to their name and title, they were treated with regard and reverence. But when, in after times, they became as notorious for their immo-

immoralities, they deſervedly ſunk into general neglect. The Firſt Chriſtian apologiſts urge their vices home upon them; and conſider the popular contempt into which they were fallen as the natural conſequence of their profligate manners: For even uncultivated reaſon tells us, that it is abſurd to expect *grapes of thorns, or figs of thiſtles.* SERM. XII.

But a *Miniſter of eſtabliſhed Religion* ſtands upon another footing. He delivers nothing, on his own Authority. His office is to inforce God's *eſtabliſhed* Truth by argument and perſuaſion. The Guide he recommends is not HIMSELF, but HOLY SCRIPTURE; which he invites all men diligently to ſtudy and examine. And if, in aid of his general office, he maketh one part of his miniſtry to conſiſt in *interpreting* what he thinks may *miniſter grace to the hearers*, it is but to aſſiſt them in their Knowledge of God's Word: and to weigh the force of what he offers, in behalf of it's Authority. Now what have the private morals of ſuch a Character further to do in this matter, than to excite the compaſſion of every charitable hearer? who cannot but lament that ſo much ſcience, and application to holy

SERM. XII.

things, as is neceſſary to fit him for the diſcharge of his employment, ſhould not have force enough to ſubdue his evil habits.

But if, on this account, we do unreaſonably to ſet at nought a Miniſter of Chriſt; how abſurd is it to encourage or excuſe ourſelves in our vices, by his bad example. We reject the authority he has from God, we reſiſt the evidence he draws from Reaſon, yet ſeem to reſpect, in him, the works of the fleſh and the tyranny of enſlaving Paſſions.

But, of all the deluſions into which licentious men are apt to fall, the moſt unhappy ſure is that, which, from the vices and imperfections of the *miniſters of the Goſpel*, inclines them to reject, or entertain ſuſpicions of, that *Religion itſelf*, they are intruſted to teach: And yet I believe nothing has more contributed to keep men attached to their infidelity than this fooliſh prejudice.

Did the Goſpel deliver, or was it ſuſpected to deliver, any doctrines even of the remoteſt tendency to encourage it's Miniſters in their vices, much might be ſaid for this ſtrange concluſion. But when it is by thoſe

thoſe very doctrines that the People diſcover the true nature and enormity of vice; when it is by thoſe doctrines they hear the Preacher condemned out of their own mouths, it ſeems ſtrangely perverſe to think amiſs of Religion on that account. Surely theſe men of reaſon have not brought themſelves to expect, that, in the ordinary courſe of God's providence, a mere knowledge of his Will, and of the truths ariſing from it, ſhould have a reſiſtleſs force to bear down inveterate habits, and ſubdue the ſtrongeſt bent of human inclination. SERM. XI.

In concluſion, I have only one caution to ſubjoin, That what is here ſaid of the prejudices and perverſities of the *Hearers of the Word*, be not miſtaken, as intended for an excuſe of the immoral *Preachers* of it. Their guilt admits of none. Againſt them, under the names of the *Scribes and Phariſees* of my text, Jeſus, in the ſame place, where he vindicates their public character from contempt, hath denounced the ſevereſt woe of offended Heaven. *Woe unto you, Scribes and Phariſees, Hypocrites, How can you eſcape the damnation of Hell?* But when he ſpeaks ſtill more directly

SERM. XII. rectly to the *Miniſters of his own Religion*, his condemnation goes ſtill higher. *It is impoſſible* (ſays he to his Diſciples) *but that offences will come: but woe unto him through whom they come. It were better for him that a mill-ſtone were hanged about his neck, and he caſt into the ſea, than that he ſhould offend one of theſe littles ones*[g]. The *woe* denounced againſt the *Miniſters of the Moſaic Law* was for offences ariſing from enormous crimes: But this, againſt the *Miniſters of the Goſpel*, is, for offences, occaſioned even by indiſcretions. *Whoever* (ſays he) *ſhall offend one of theſe little ones:* and this, with the higheſt reaſon, both on account of the ſuperior holineſs of the Goſpel, and the ſuperior charity required of it's Followers.

In a word, The Crime of a profligate life, in the *Stewards of the Myſteries of God*, is aggravated by many conſiderations.

The acquired knowledge, neceſſary for the ordinary diſcharge of their office, gives them advantages, in religious wiſdom, above other men: So that if their progreſs in

[g] Matth. xviii. 6.

virtue

virtue be not proportionable to their ſuperior knowledge of it's nature and effects, they become very guilty before God; who, by the mouth of his Son, has aſſured us, that *to whom much is given, from him much will be required*[h]. SERM. XII.

Their ſolemn dedication and ſeparation to the ſervice of Religion, likewiſe demands a more eſpecial ſanctity of manners. The very Heathens ſaw, that ſuch as were employed about holy things, ought to be endowed with, or at leaſt ſhould learn to acquire, a higher degree of purity, than thoſe who ſtood further from the altar: And, accordingly, public authority exacted from them the obſervance of a ſtricter and ſeverer rule of moral conduct.

The ſum of all is this, That the *Hearer* ſhould not entertain prejudices againſt Religion, on account of the bad life of the *Preacher*: Nor, on the other hand, ſhould the *Clergy* ſuffer theſe unjuſt prejudices of the *Laity* to abate their horror for a faithleſs diſcharge of their Truſt. Let them

[h] Luke xii. 48.

equally

SERM. XII. equally concur in confeſſing the divine original of VIRTUE and RELIGION, in the midſt of all their abuſes of both; let them concur to give Glory to God, while each lies humbled under the deep ſenſe of his own condemnation.

SER-

SERMON XIII.

Of Church Communion.

LUKE ix. 49.

And John anſwered and ſaid, Maſter, we ſaw one caſting out Devils in thy name; and we forbad him, becauſe he followeth not with us. And Jeſus ſaid unto him, FORBID HIM NOT: FOR HE THAT IS NOT AGAINST US IS FOR US.

WHEN Jeſus, in the entrance on his Miniſtry, had thought fit to confirm the truth of his Goſpel, by the EVIDENCE OF MIRACLES, he was graciouſly pleaſed to contrive, that that which was the credential of his Miſſion, ſhould, at the ſame time, miniſter relief and conſolation to the *bodily* infirmities of thoſe,

SERM. XIII.

thoſe, whoſe *ſpiritual* diſorders he was ſent to heal. On this account, as well as to give additional luſtre to his Character, he communicated of this divine power to his Followers.

But theſe groſs and carnal-minded men conſidered their gifts and graces, not as a *truſt* imparted to them for the benefit of others; but as a *prerogative* given them in proper to adorn their own perſonal characters. So that, on ſeeing a man diſpenſing the ſame bleſſings, tho' in the name of their common maſter, yet becauſe he *followed not with them*, they forbad him the exerciſe of his miniſterial function; as if they themſelves had been erected into a Society or Company, with the privilege of an excluſive trade: And, with great ſatisfaction in this their conduct, they acquaint their heavenly Maſter with the ſilence they had impoſed upon this preſuming Schiſmatic. But they were ſurprized at their reception, when, inſtead of applauſe, they were received with this cold admonition, *Forbid him not: for he that is not againſt us is for us.* Yet they would have ſeen reaſon to be thankful for the mode-

moderation and gentleneſs of the reproof, had they reflected on the abſurdity, as well as iniquity, of their behaviour. For it was but juſt before [a] that theſe very men, who now reſtrained a *Follower of Chriſt* from exerciſing the virtue communicated to him, becauſe he was not of their *Society*, had themſelves eſſayed the very ſame power, and, thro' the deficiency of their faith, had eſſayed it in vain. So that we may reaſonably conclude, there was in this *firſt* exertion of uncharitable reſtraint, what has been found in it ever ſince; not a little envy mingled with a great deal of zeal. SERM. XIII.

Yet as carnal as this temper is, and as ſeaſonably as it was reproved, it has rarely failed to ſhew itſelf in every age, and almoſt in every country, to ſtop the progreſs of the Goſpel, and narrow the *Communion of Saints*.

And here, as in all other caſes, where the genius of our holy Faith is violated, a text was at hand, to flatter their prejudices, and ſupport them in their delu-

[a] Ver. 40.

ſions.

SERM. XIII.

sions. For St. Matthew [b] tells us, that Jesus, on a certain occasion delivered himself in the following manner, HE THAT IS NOT WITH ME IS AGAINST ME. A declaration so opposite to the former, that it will require to have the two texts accorded, before we can draw any certain conclusion from either of them.

It is to be observed, then, that these different propositions are delivered by Jesus at very different junctures: so that we may presume they were directed to different objects; and may therefore be well reconciled, and made to stand quietly together. This is indeed the case; they bear a very friendly aspect towards each other.

The words of my text were occasioned by the disciples forbiding a man the exercise of his ministry, tho' he professed his faith in Jesus, because he conformed not to the discipline of the *Twelve*. But the words in St. Matthew were directed to another sort of men, his enemies, the *Pharisees*; who, when they were convinced of the truth of his miracles,

[b] Ch. xii. 30.

were

were yet ſo prejudiced againſt his miſſion, SERM. that they affected to believe, *he caſt out* XIII. *Devils by Belzebub, the Prince of the Devils.* The abſurdity of which impious ſubterfuge, when Jeſus had expoſed as it deſerved, he ſubjoined this general truth, *He that is not with me is againſt me.*

Here we ſee it is the diſſenting from the FAITH OF JESUS, not from the DISCIPLINE OF A CHURCH denominated from him, which deprives the Diſſentient of any ſhare in him. And, indeed, as it would ſeem to violate the ſtrong Benevolence of our holy Religion, to debar the faithful of their claim to its benefits, on account of their ſeparating from, or rather not aſſociating with, ſome of its profeſſors, in Church-fellowſhip; ſo it would apparently diſhonour its dignity, and defeat its peculiar virtue, to imagine that the oppoſers of it had a right to its privileges, on this only title, that they ſtood upon the common foundation of the *moral Law.*

Theſe two texts, therefore, do not only agree well together, but do indeed imply the truth of one another. For if the benefits be ſo great, and ſo neceſſary to humanity,

SERM. XIII.

it is not fit they ſhould depend on ſo precarious a ground, as this or that *mode of diſcipline*: And if it be the proper virtue of Chriſtianity, to beſtow them, it would not be juſt that any other mode of belief ſhould ſhare in the honour of conveying them.

Theſe reciprocal Truths, likewiſe, have a commodious application: and we may properly oppoſe them to thoſe two extremes; one of which is apt to bewilder the zealots for the *national Religion*; the other, the lukewarm profeſſors of *Chriſtianity at large*: While one ſide ſuppoſeth, there is no Salvation out of the *pale of his own Church*; and the other, that there is no happineſs which *moral virtue alone* is not able to procure.

Theſe errors are equally hurtful to true Religion. But the former only is my preſent ſubject: It is that which my text condemns. How juſtly, we ſhall now ſee.

This narrow, intolerant Spirit, which excludes from the benefits of the Goſpel, all without the national or eſtabliſhed pale, notwithſtanding their profeſſion of the common faith of Jeſus, is alike injurious to GOD and MAN.

I. For

I. For firſt, it alters the TERMS OF SALVATION, as they are delivered in the Goſpel; which are, *Faith in Chriſt, and repentance towards God*; by adding others to them, ſuch as *fellow-memberſhip in Church Communion*. To change the fundamental Laws of Chriſt's ſpiritual Kingdom, where he is the only Lawgiver, is an offenſe of the higheſt nature, as not only implying ſimple diſobedience, but uſurpation likewiſe. A Church acting with this Spirit, not only throws off Subjection, but aſſumes the Sovereignty: And is no longer the Sheep-fold of the good Shepherd, but the den of Anti-Chriſt, the Thief and Robber. SERM. XIII.

Again, This innovation is oppoſite to the doctrine of REDEMPTION, and foreign to the whole genius of the Goſpel. They were not the ſins of men, as they make collective bodies in Communities, but the ſins of each individual of our common ſpecies, for which Chriſt died. The deſcendants of *Adam* had, thro' his tranſgreſſion, loſt the free gift of immortality; which was as freely reſtored by the death and ſufferings of Chriſt. But to whom

SERM. XIII. was it reſtored? not to collective bodies, who ſhould worſhip this Reſtorer with public Rites and Ceremonies; but to every particular man who had a *lively faith* in him. The Goſpel is the publication of the *glad tidings* of this reſtoration: And tho' indeed it was firſt addreſſed to the *Jews*, as a NATION, a Church, or Society; yet this was not becauſe the redemption of Mankind had any thing to do with Societies of Men as ſuch; but becauſe the *Race of Abraham*, from whoſe loins the promiſed Redeemer was to ſpring, had been, by God's ſpecial appointment, collected into a Body, as amongſt other uſes, ſo for this, the better to prepare his way, and to mark his predicted original according to the fleſh. But when the *Gentiles* had in their turn the Goſpel offered unto them, the addreſs was only to PARTICULARS. For tho' the terms of Salvation reſpected the *Jewiſh Sanhedrim*, yet the *Roman Senate*, as ſuch, had no concern in them. And thoſe *particulars* who received the word, became not neceſſarily, from the ſimple nature and genius of the Faith, members of any Community, but of the ſpiritual Kingdom of God.

And

And tho' for the better conveyance of the glad tidings of the Goſpel, it was expedient that the Diſciples of Chriſt ſhould be formed into a kind of Sodality, yet the founder of our holy Faith, never intended this, or any other religious Society, to be part of it's eſſentials; as appears from his expreſs words in my text, where he receives one, who was propagating the faith in him, to all the benefits and prerogatives of his Religion, tho' he was out of the pale of that fraternity, he had juſt then inſtituted. SERM. XIII.

Now what Jeſus himſelf did, in this eſtabliſhment, for the propagation of Religion, was done afterwards by his Apoſtles, in imitation of him, for the ſupport and continuance of it. They erected Churches and Societies wherever they came: which being founded in one common Faith, were in Communion with one another, as the various parts and members of the ſpiritual Kingdom of God; but, at the ſame time, no more eſſential to that Faith than their own ſodality founded by their Maſter.

SERM. XIII.

Nay, for the very reaſons of eſtabliſhing the Churches, namely the conveyance and ſecurity of Religion, it appears they could not be eſſential to the Faith; nothing more obſtructing it's progreſs than the notion of a Society's being eſſential to it, as the conſequence of that is the confining Salvation to ſome one Church or Communion.

From all this it appears, that a principle which narrows the communion of Saints, is contrary to the doctrine of Redemption, and foreign to the genius of the Goſpel. Such are the diſhonours this notion brings upon Revelation.

II. Humanity is not leſs injured by it. For firſt it turns the free gift of God into a bartering trade; the liberty of the Goſpel into a ſpiritual tyranny. For when once it is believed, that there is no ſalvation out of a particular Church, and that the admiſſion into it, and excluſion from it, are at the diſpoſal of a certain order of men, the perſons and fortunes of the faithful will lye at the mercy of their Miniſters. And it will require a very uncommon ſhare of Grace and

and Virtue not to abuſe ſo dangerous a privilege; and to reſtrain avarice and ambition from proſtituting the ſacred ordinances of Religion to lucrative and ſecular purpoſes. SERM. XIII.

Of this we ſee a ſad example in the CHURCH OF ROME: who, from the principle of no ſalvation out of it's own Community, at length brought men to believe, that ſalvation depended on the Clergy's duly adminiſtring the ſacraments, and other offices of Religion. From hence aroſe all the mercantile traffic of Indulgencies, and the whole political machine of Excommunication. And by this means the CHURCH, that is the CLERGY, got themſelves poſſeſſed of all the power, and almoſt all the wealth, of the Chriſtian World.

Secondly, Religious Societies formed by divine appointment to ſpread and to ſupport the FAITH, and, together with it, the great principle of univerſal BENEVOLENCE, became, through the bigotry of this error, the very bane of *benevolence*; by exaſperating every Church or Society againſt another, for it's excluſive pretenſions; and by ſtirring up reciprocal hate and averſion to one another, from the ſuppoſed ſtate of re-

SERM. XIII.

probation in which they all lie amongſt themſelves; till the whole Church militant, inſtead of directing it's warfare againſt their ſpiritual enemies, turns its arms upon itſelf: and dividing into ſeparate bands, and parties, each damns and curſes, ſmites and perſecutes the other, who appears with marks and badges different from his own. For perſecution naturally follows unchurching and reprobation. And Zeal is never at eaſe till it hath completed the ſyſtem of deſolation.

This may be ſeen from the conduct of the very men in my text, amongſt whom this evil firſt appeared; for the Story informs us, that their next exploit, after ſilencing this bold Separatiſt, was the calling down fire from heaven on the heretical Samaritans [a]. A circumſtance recorded by the holy Spirit to inſtruct us, how eaſy a ſtep it is, from INTERDICTION, to the SECULAR ARM.

Theſe are ſome of the miſchiefs which ariſe from the wretched bigotry of confining ſalvation, and the benefits of Chriſt's death and paſſion, to one Church or Society; forgetful of that juſt reproof which ſo ſeaſonably curbed this ſpirit in it's birth,

[a] Ver. 44, 45.

Forbid

Forbid him not; for he that is not againſt us is for us. SERM. XIII.

But falſhood is never ſo effectually expoſed as when it is traced and laid open to it's original. Let us follow this error then to it's ſource.

The nature of things require, that men profeſſing a *Religion* ſhould form themſelves into a *Society*, in order to ſupport that profeſſion. On this principle it was that *Moſes* and *Jeſus*, the Authors, under God, of a revealed Religion, poſitively inſtituted that Society which the nature of things virtually preſcribed: But with this difference; the Moſaic Religion being temporary; the rudiments of one more compleat; and given, in the interim, only to a ſingle family or people, in order to keep them ſeparate from the reſt of mankind, it needed ſuch a peculiar Ritual, as ſhould give it a PUBLIC as well as a PRIVATE part; and make the *houſe of Iſrael*, as well as each *individual* of it, the ſubject of Religion. In this caſe, the *religious ſociety* was *eſſential* to the Religion, and compoſed a Church of one denomination; out of whoſe pale no man could be intitled to its benefits.

SERM. XIII.

But Jeſus, as the Author of an *univerſal* Religion, tho' riſing on the foundations of the *Moſaic*, had only the general reaſon for forming his diſciples into a Society, namely, for the better ſecurity of the Faith; conſequently, the *Society* made *no eſſential* part of his Religion; nor needed a Church of one denomination, within which, the benefits of it ſhould be confined.

Yet, ſo it happened, that the Rulers and Governors of this Church, which, as we ſay, aroſe out of Judaiſm, did not rightly conſider *what Spirit they were of*[a], nor ſufficiently advert to the reaſons, on which that peculiarity, in Judaiſm, was founded; and ſo transferred it into *Chriſtianity*, as they had unwarily done many others, to its irreparable damage and diſhonour.

What hath been here ſaid is ſufficient to unmaſk that vile impoſture obtruded on the early Chriſtian Church, called the APOSTOLICAL CONSTITUTIONS. The Forger of which apparently went on this falſe principle, that ſome one individual Society was as eſſential to *Chriſtianity* as it had been to *Judaiſm*: ſo that a ſyſtem of Laws, equivalent to the Ritual of *Moſes*, was as neceſſary in one Religion

[a] Luke ix 55.

Religion as in the other: to ſupply this want, the honeſt man, whoever he was, ſet upon his worthy labour. And in all probability foreſaw, that his forgery would neither want advocates nor arguments, ſuch as they were, to keep it in credit. We have ſeen of theſe: and the amount of their reaſoning comes to this, "that if the *Conſtitutions* be not genuine, the Apoſtles made no Laws for the government of Chriſt's Church; which would ſink it's dignity below the Moſaic." They were not aware, that this imaginary advantage did not ariſe from the perfection, but the imperfection of the Jewiſh Religion. SERM. XIII.

But now let me not be miſunderſtood, as if from all this I would infer, that it were indifferent, in what Church or Society we profeſs our Faith in Chriſt. Some Churches, we know, have become ſo corrupt as to endanger the ſalvation of thoſe who continue in them, and, on this principle, amongſt others, we ſeparated from the CHURCH OF ROME. Well would it have been had the firſt Separatiſts kept entire, and not ſplit and divided themſelves into different Sects. But ſince Providence

SERM. XIII.

vidence decreed otherwiſe, their poſterity had yet a taſk behind; and this was, to chuſe amongſt the ſeveral Churches erected on reformation principles, that which came neareſt to the purity of the Goſpel. For with ſome or other, the Genius of our holy Religion, and the condition of mankind, require that we ſhould join.

The choice, too, ſhould be made with the utmoſt precaution. For amongſt the various Societies of *Chriſtians*, there are ſome, in which the holy *Ordinances* are more regularly adminiſtered; *Diſcipline* more equitably inforced; and Chriſtian *Liberty* more watchfully protected. Now all theſe circumſtances tending to forward the true Believer in the way of his Salvation, it is of much importance to him to chuſe his fellow-membership in that Church, which is moſt exactly dreſſed on the model of primitive rectitude and ſimplicity.

Thus, we ſee, there is a wide difference between declining to join in Communion with this or that Church here, and excluding them from the *Communion of Saints*

hereafter. Nothing can juſtify the latter. Whereas prudence, integrity, and common juſtice, frequently require us to keep ſeparate from a Church of this or that denomination, when by joining in communion with it we ſubject ourſelves to unprofitable, difficult, or dangerous ordinances; when it impoſeth on us what we may think ſinful or unjuſt; or, laſtly, when it hath contracted that enormous ſtain and pollution here condemned, *the denying ſalvation to all out of it's own pale.* SERM. XIII.

My purpoſe, in this diſcourſe, was only to expoſe the vain opinion of inherent ſanctity, or ſuperiority, or excluſive privilege in one Church above another, merely becauſe founded by a *Paul*, a *Peter*, an *Andrew*, or a *James*: or merely becauſe adminiſtered by an Hierarchy, by an equal Miniſtry, or a moderate Epiſcopacy. Becauſe ſuch opinions have produced, and do ſtill ſupport, that wretched Spirit, which here, on the Authority of God's Word, I have endeavoured to diſcredit, and ventured to condemn: confiding in the Oracle of eternal Truth, *that he that is not againſt us, is for us*; and will be treated by

SERM. XIII. by our heavenly Maſter, not as a Rebel, but a Subject; and therefore ſhould be now conſidered by Us, as he will then be by Him, who is the common Judge of us both.

SER-

SERMON XIV.

Of Church Communion.

EPHES. iv. 3.

I beſeech you, that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called — endeavouring to keep the UNITY OF THE SPIRIT IN THE BOND OF PEACE.

THE nature and genius of the Chriſtian Religion annexes the rewards of the Goſpel-covenant to a *Syſtem* of FAITH or belief: and, at the ſame time, requires and encourages, examination into the truth and reaſonableneſs of ſuch a Syſtem. From the firſt circumſtance ariſes the diſcredit, from the

SERM. XIV.

the other the danger, of difference in opinion; whether that difference reſpects the *truth*, or only the *importance* of doctrines ſuppoſed to belong to the integrity of the Chriſtian Faith. And on this diſcredit, and on this danger, is founded the admonition of my text, *to endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit.*

By theſe *endeavours* the welfare of Religion, and eſpecially of the Chriſtian, is beſt conſulted. For

The flouriſhing condition of every ſyſtem of things, whether *ſpiritual* or *civil*, conſiſts in their being *kept* in a ſtate of Peace and Honour.

Concord and uniformity in opinions, after a careful examination of their truth, does, in a ſupreme degree, ſecure the peace of the Church, and advance the honour of Religion; as will be ſeen by conſidering, what it is that moſt diſturbs and diſgraces both.

Unreaſonable fondneſs for our own notions, and miſtaken zeal for God's glory, make us eager to bring others over to our opinions. And in proportion to the

the fancied importance of the doctrines, SERM. and to the wideneſs of the difference, XIV. will be our endeavours to prevail; and at the ſame time, our reſentment at their oppoſition.

Diverſity of religious opinions, therefore, muſt needs produce ſuſpicions very oppoſite to ſocial peace; ſuch as perverſity of will, corruption of heart, and, what ſeems leſs uncharitable, but is yet more hardly endured, a narrowneſs of mind and ſentiment. Theſe ſoon proceed to open cenſures, and mutual bickerings; till at laſt each party regards all that differ from them as the enemies of God, and unworthy of their benevolence and love.

Nor is difference of opinion leſs injurious to the honour of our holy Religion, than obnoxious to the peace of the Church.

One would naturally expect, that the fundamental doctrines of a Religion delivered as the final completion of all God's preceding revelations, and intended for univerſal uſe, ſhould be preciſe and clear; agreeable to the moſt obvious reaſon, and con-

SERM. XIV.

conformable to the plaineſt truth. To find, then, diſputes and differences concerning Doctrines deemed to be eſſential, muſt needs have an ill effect on the popular reputation of Religion; and afford it's enemies a handle (which the ſanctity of it's precepts will always make them very ready to lay hold on) to bring in queſtion the divinity of it's original. They will ſay, "That the mark of a divine truth is the fullneſs of it's evidence; which is a *neceſſary* quality of truths propoſed for general belief, and inforced by religious ſanctions, both on account of the importance of the truths themſelves, and the incapacity of the people to comprehend any but the moſt obvious. Yet the endleſs diſputes concerning fundamentals, ſeem to ſhew, that ſuch pretended truths want this neceſſary degree of evidence: and ſo cannot have the original which they pretend to."

Such are the objections of men, who are always ready to take offence as they are to give it, by throwing ſtumbling blocks in the way of the weak and captious.

And

And tho' the force of theſe cavils be but ſmall; yet the evil ariſing from the occaſion is very great. SERM. XIV.

Having thus ſhewn the importance of *endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit*; the next is to propoſe directions for it's better obſervance; 1. By explaining how it became violated: and 2. How it may be reſtored to it's integrity.

The genius of Chriſtianity, as well as the repeated declarations of it's Founder, concur in aſſuring us, *That it is by* FAITH ALONE *we are juſtified, or intitled to the rewards of the Covenant of Grace.* Hence ſome men, who held this truth in it's greateſt ſimplicity, thought they never could have enough: and ſo, inſtead of ſtopping at the few general and fundamental Principles of Chriſtian faith, clearly delivered, and uniformly believed by all, they went on, and brought into the Church, as terms of Communion, abſtruſe queſtions relating to points obſcurely delivered; and made ſtill more doubtful by having the Principles of the greek Philoſophy, to which the *ſacred Writers* paid no regard, and with which the *Faith* hath no concern,

SERM. XIV.

applied to their ſolution. They did not conſider, that the very obſcurity itſelf ſufficiently declared that they never were propoſed by the gracious Author of our Faith, for fundamental articles; nor conſequently that he ever intended the profeſſion of them as the neceſſary condition of Church Communion. Much leſs had this imaginary defect in the all-perfect *word of God* given any ſcandal, had it been conſidered, that the proper aim and buſineſs of the Founder of an univerſal Religion muſt needs be, to repreſent the divine Being under the idea of the MORAL GOVERNOR of the World, without any further explanation of his metaphyſical Nature than ſo far forth as it tended to promote the moral purpoſe of Religion.

Now the violation of the *unity of the Spirit* having been occaſioned by theſe miſtakes, we may eaſily collect that the means of preſerving it entire had been the requiring no more, as the terms of Church Communion, than what Chriſt hath delivered to be explicitely believed: and theſe not conſiſting of many particulars; and all of them clear and ſimple, had afforded no handle

handle for difference or diverſity of Opini- SERM.
ons: eſpecially had due care been taken to XIV.
expreſs, as much as poſſible, thoſe points
of Communion, in ſcripture terms, without running out into modern gloſſes, conceived upon the principles of Science and Philoſophy merely human; on which, as we ſaid, the divine wiſdom of holy Scripture has neither relation nor dependence.

Theſe had been the moſt direct and efficacious means, I know of, for preſerving the *unity of the Spirit*: Always ſuppoſing that previous diſpoſition of HUMILITY and CHARITY, which all parties confeſs to be neceſſary for the union of opinions, as well as of hearts and affections.

But ſince, through a neglect of theſe rules, this unity of the Spirit hath been unhappily violated, the next queſtion is of RESTORING it. Which, what is here ſaid concerning the means of it's preſervation, ſhews us is to be done,

1. By retrenching all unneceſſary articles, to which the animoſity of parties, the ſuperſtition of barbarous ages, and even the negligence of time, have given an imaginary importance: and by reducing the formula

SERM. XIV.

of Faith to the primitive ſimplicity: Leaving all diſputable points, together with ſuch other as no party deems neceſſary, to the free deciſion of every man's private judgment: whereby the terms of Church Communion will be made as wide as is conſiſtent with the welfare and good government of a SOCIETY.

2. As diviſions, long kept up, have inflamed the paſſions, ſtrengthened the prejudices, and biaſſed the judgments of the contending Parties; another, and indeed principal means of reſtoring unity, is the mutual compliance with one another's weakneſſes. And this, methinks, would not be difficult amongſt well diſpoſed men, as we muſt needs eſteem thoſe to be, who ſeek to regain this *unity of the Spirit:* For tho' theſe long contentions may have made us blind to our own infirmities, yet they have rather ſharpened our ſight towards thoſe of our adverſaries. So that a general weakneſs being mutually ſeen and pitied, the very paſſions raiſed by our differences may be naturally brought to promote our reconcilement.

But

But notwithſtanding this apparent eaſe in bearing with one another's weakneſſes, it deſerves a more than ordinary care to put the diſpoſition in practice; as Eccleſiaſtics of all denominations are but too apt to reaſon wrong in applying it to their mutual endeavours for reconciliation. "The demands of our adverſaries, ſay the eſtabliſhed party, are for matters owned by themſelves to be no duties; and againſt others they confeſs to be indifferent: why then ſhould we alter the ſtated order of things to comply with their perverſeneſs or imbecillity?" But thoſe who reaſon thus, ſeem not to conſider that they themſelves become guilty of the very miſcarriage of which they accuſe, and rightly accuſe, their Adverſaries. For if the thing in queſtion be of matters indifferent, why are they not complied with, for the ſake of ſo great a bleſſing as the *unity of the Spirit*, how fooliſhly or obſtinately ſoever demanded? Allow them to be weak or willful for inſiſting on indifferent things as the terms of fellow-membership in Church Communion; Do we ſhew leſs of this imbecillity in refuſing to comply with them

SERM. XIV.

SERM. XIV.

in theſe indifferences? which, becauſe they are ſo, we pretend our oppoſites ſhould not be indulged in. For wherein conſiſts their fault or folly but in treating indifferent points as *Duties* by an obſtinate demand of them? And wherein conſiſts our wiſdom, but in treating indifferent points as *Sins* by as obſtinate a refuſal? Now when this mutual miſcarriage hath defeated, as it often hath done, the repeated endeavours of good men on all ſides to reſtore the violated *unity of the Spirit*, each Party may reaſonably blame the conduct of the other, but it is impoſſible he can juſtify his own. Indeed it would be hard to ſay who are moſt to blame; Thoſe who oppoſe eſtabliſhed authority for the impoſition of matters indifferent; or that Authority which rigidly inſiſts on them, and will abate nothing for the ſake of tender uninformed Conſciences: I ſay it would be hard to reſolve this, had not the holy Apoſtle done it for us, where he ſays, *We that are ſtrong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and* NOT TO PLEASE OURSELVES[a]. *I myſelf*, ſays he, *do ſo, and all for the Goſpel's ſake.*

[a] Rom. xv. 1.

This

This is the man who tells us *he had fought a good fight and overcome.* And we may believe him; for, in this contention, the Party that ſubmits is always Conqueror. SERM. XIV.

But now, tho' the UNITY OF THE SPIRIT cannot be purchaſed at too high a price, yet UNIFORMITY of eſtabliſhed worſhip may be bought too dear. Here then, in purſuit of this ſpiritual bleſſing we muſt ſtop; and not venture to go one ſtep further: We muſt not dare to procure it either at the expence of TRUTH or JUSTICE. It muſt be now left to the good care of Providence. And this, as we ſhall ſee next, is implied in the very words which direct us to attempt it.

1. It is the *unity of the* SPIRIT which the Apoſtle recommends to us, to keep and preſerve. But if, for the ſake of *uniformity of* WORSHIP, we diſguiſe, or betray, or give up any fundamental Truth, it becomes a *confederacy* of the *Spirit of this World:* at beſt a politic Union for the preſervation of civil peace: A peace, where Religion is not the actuating principle, but only the cloke and cover.

SERM. XIV.

2. Nor again, was this *unity of the Spirit* preſerved, (ſo long as it was preſerved) nor is it to be again recovered, by reſtraint or CIVIL-COERCION. This would be violating that *bond of peace*, in which, the Apoſtle tells us, the *unity of the Spirit* is to be kept. For *force upon the Conſcience* being a violation of man's natural rights, it will be always reſented accordingly. Hence it is that Perſecution for Religion neceſſarily tears aſunder all the bonds of Peace and Charity; and reduces the Church of Chriſt to that diſtracted condition which our bleſſed Maſter deſcribed when he foretold the miſeries that would ariſe from Perſecution. *The Father* (ſays he) *ſhall be divided againſt the Son, and the Son againſt the Father; the Mother againſt the Daughter, and the Daughter againſt the Mother. And a man's foes ſhall be thoſe of his own houſe.*

When therefore thoſe *means* ſpoken of above have, through the early folly or later perverſity of man, proved ineffectual to preſerve or to reſtore the *unity of the Spirit*, the only remaining care to which we ſhould then turn us, is the keeping faſt the BOND OF PEACE. Now

Now the only means of ſecuring this, as experience hath fully ſhewn us, is by a general TOLERATION, or full Liberty to all Chriſtian ſects (who give ſecurity for their good behaviour to the civil Government) of worſhiping God according to the dictates of their own Conſciences, without let or moleſtation from the ESTABLISHED RELIGION. SERM. XIV.

Under this wiſe and well regulated proviſion, when the bleſſing of *unity of Spirit* cannot be obtained, the Church of Chriſt may be ſtill enabled to enjoy all the benefits which ariſe from the *bond of Peace*. So that tho' men will not be perſuaded to go all one way to Heaven, yet it is to be hoped, when no human impediment is laid acroſs the road, that good men of all parties may get thither at laſt; tho' ſome with more, and others with leſs difficulty.

The diſtractions and iniquities of theſe latter ages give us no reaſonable grounds to hope for a better condition of the Church. It is therefore that which reaſonable men would aim at. It is that which our own Church enjoys Here we ſought our peace: and here, happily we have found it:

SERM. XIV.

it: The experience of a courſe of years having diſcovered that it is productive of much good, and preventive of many evils.

But the reſtleſs mind of man, rarely at eaſe with the preſent ſtate of things, and ſtill impatient for a better, has ever, as opportunities ſerved, been aſſuming various projects, of viſionary improvements, but all really tending to defeat or diſturb this well-ordered regulation.

The moſt plauſible, yet as viſionary as any, is that called a COMPREHENSION. A word very expreſſive to diſtinguiſh the Thing, from that *Unity of the Spirit*; and even from that *Uniformity*, ſpoken of above. An *Unity* is the agreement in heart of thoſe who aim at the ſame thing tho' by different ways; an *Uniformity* exacts a profeſſion of the ſame thing by the ſame way; but a *Comprehenſion* would be for tacking together different things and different ways, even under the exiſting difference of profeſſion. The firſt is brotherly-concord; the ſecond is Church-communion; but the laſt is political-combination. Nor is the Scheme leſs impracticable than

it

it is miſchievous; as may be ſeen from the following conſiderations. SERM. XIV.

1. This project hath of late been conceived by men who agreed in nothing but in a diſſatisfaction with the preſent order of things. For one ſide having been unjuſtly prejudiced againſt the equity of a TOLERATION; and the other, as unjuſtly, againſt the rights of an ESTABLISHMENT; they readily concurred in a *Comprehenſion*, that ſeemed to ſuperſede the uſe of both. But we needed not the gift of prophecy to foreſee that it would come to nothing; ſince the very thing which ſo naturally brought the confederates together, would, when they underſtand one another, as naturally ſeparate them; namely the profeſſion of inconſiſtent Principles: and if not ſo; yet their Principles being at the ſame time *equally falſe*, it would make their ſtaying together ineffectual: For what could a mutual falſhood produce but an impracticable abſurdity. And well perhaps is it for Religion that it always does ſo. For this *Comprehenſion*, the ape, and mimic of *Unity*, tends to the *deſtruction* of that ſpiritual SOCIETY, which *Unity* ſtrengthens and ſupports.

2. The

SERM. XIV.

2. The Projectors of it are generally private men, who undertake for more than they can perfom. For it is not the temper of *Societies* to come into what is promiſed in their names, by men uncommiſſioned to act for them.

3. The main end of a *comprehenſion* being PEACE; indeed the only end that could induce the Magiſtrate to engage in ſuch a buſineſs; and the Community being already in poſſeſſion of this bleſſing by a well ordered *Toleration*, He will, I ſuppoſe, be very hardly perſuaded to exchange an experienced good in poſſeſſion, for one untried; which, tho' it appear fair in proſpect, yet the road to it may prove difficult and dangerous.

4. It hath been often eſſayed in vain by the worthieſt and wiſeſt men of their times, ſuch as CASSANDER and GROTIUS. And it is no wonder this fancied *Magiſterium* ſhould ſtill evaporate in the *projection*. For either the *Comprehenſion* muſt be ſo large and looſe as to diſſolve all Church Government, and even Religious Society: Or if it be ſo tempered as to keep theſe ſubſiſting, there will be need of all the regulations

gulations which diſtinguiſh and ſeparate things *tolerated* from things *eſtabliſhed*; and then *Comprehenſion* will ſhrink back again into an empty name. SERM. XIV.

On the whole, Since the Church of Chriſt hath been ſo unhappy as to be deprived of it's greateſt bleſſing, the UNITY OF THE SPIRIT, let not the ſame, or even contrary follies, be of force to perſuade ſuch who are ſenſible of the loſs, to try concluſions with what yet remains; the next beſt good of Society, THE BOND OF PEACE; but rather let them be content to preſerve what we ſtill poſſeſs, by ſuch ſober means as the genius and diſpoſition of the times will permit us to employ. Theſe we have long experienced to be abundantly ſufficient. So that thoſe who wiſh well either to the ESTABLISHED, or to the TOLERATED, Societies of Chriſtians, have nothing to do but to prevent the exerciſe of their diſtinct powers from degenerating: This, indeed, might at laſt provoke the MAGISTRATE to lend an unwilling ear to the ignorant and deſtructive ſchemes of theſe vain and idle Viſionaries:

But

SERM. XIV.

But till then, I ſuppoſe, Sober Church-men, and experienced Miniſters of State, will have this mutual confidence in one another, that neither the Church will abuſe it's privileges, nor the State leave it unprotected.

SER-

SERMON XV.

The Influence of LEARNING *on* REVELATION.

LUKE xviii. 8.

— When the Son of Man cometh, ſhall he find FAITH *on the Earth?*

SERM. XV.

THIS is one of thoſe fatal MARKS expreſſive of the latter fortunes of the Chriſtian Church, as foretold, in the ſacred Writings, amongſt the Signs of the ſecond coming of the *Son of man*. And with This, many other of thoſe ſigns now concurring, ſeem, in the opinion of ſerious men, to point out to us the near approach of that awful period; the completion of the *moral*, and the renovation of the *natural* ſyſtem of things.

But

SERM. XV.

But the labour of the Chriſtian Divine will be perhaps better employed in ſearching out the natural cauſes of the riſing diſorders in the Church of Chriſt, than in hazardous conjectures about Futurity; altho' laid open to him in ſome meaſure by the import of thoſe *marks*, which the predicted evils are ſuppoſed to bear.

And indeed, if He have not this diſcretion, his ſpeculations will ſometimes, as in the caſe before us, be rudely called off from the Prophetic matter, to other conſiderations, in which the honour of *Chriſtianity* is more immediately concerned.

A late noble Writer [a], who, together with the Religion of his Country, hath attempted to eraſe from the minds of men the very idea of all that goes under the name of Religion, hath, amongſt his diſcoveries of the FIRST PHILOSOPHY, laid down the following maxim: "That ſince the revival of learning in the Weſt, and the conſequent practice of thinking for ourſelves, the CHRISTIAN FAITH hath kept gradually decaying; and men have given leſs and leſs

[a] Lord BOLINGBROKE.

credit to its pretenſions [b]. From hence he would infer, and not illogically on ſuch a gratuitous Principle, that the Religion of *Jeſus* is falſe." SERM. XV.

I propoſe therefore to debate this matter with him; a point of the utmoſt importance to the honour of Revelation.

His Lordſhip's propoſition may be expreſſed in plainer terms, "That the more the world has advanced in real knowledge, the more it has diſcovered of the intenable pretenſions of the Goſpel."

To expoſe the futility of his maxim, I ſhall firſt of all ſhew, that it was not IGNORANCE which gave the Goſpel it's early credit: Which is a preſumption, at leaſt, that KNOWLEDGE hath not ſince hurt it.

[b] *The reſurrection of Letters was a fatal period: the Chriſtian ſyſtem has been attacked, and wounded too, very ſeverely ſince that time.* — And again, *Chriſtianity has been in decay ever ſince the reſurrection of Letters.* — Lord BOLINGBROKE, *on the ſtudy and uſe of hiſtory*, Vol. i. p. 182, and 185. Octavo Edition.

SERM. XV.

NOW CHRISTIANITY aroſe when KNOWLEDGE was at it's height, in the latter part of the *Auguſtan* age; and in the very centre of human learning, *Rome*, *Greece*, and the *Leſſer-Aſia*. Neither was it propagated in confederacy with Sophiſts or Philoſophers; but in direct defiance of all their eloquence and reaſoning; over which, after a ſharp conflict of FAIR ARGUMENT, it at length compleatly triumphed: Nor, again, under the protection of civil Rulers, or the Imperial authority; for theſe were all combined to it's deſtruction; ſome with the arms of human learning and Philoſophy, as MARCUS ANTONINUS and JULIAN; but the far greater part with the more peculiar argument of Tyrants, the ſword of the executioner: Yet theſe, likewiſe, the Goſpel, after a ſtill ſharper conflict of PATIENCE and SUFFERING, brought over to the ſide of Truth and Reaſon.

But what need we more? We have the noble Author himſelf giving teſtimony to the fact; and, in his *uſual way*, deſtroying his own ſyſtem of political philoſophy. He not only confeſſeth, that at the publi-

cation

cation of the Goſpel, the gentile World was highly advanced in knowledge, but that this knowledge facilitated the reception of it's truths. Speaking of this very æra, he ſays, — "Polytheiſm was "mitigated; Idolatry was in good mea- "ſure diſtinguiſhed away, amongſt the "Philoſophers at leaſt. Oracles and the "Arts of Divination grew into contempt: "and if heatheniſm was kept up by "men above the vulgar, it ſeemed to "be ſo only by the Prieſts for lucre, "and by others for fear of having no "Religion at all. THUS THE WAY WAS "PREPARED BY REASON FOR REVELA- "TION, in the *Countries where Chriſti- "anity firſt appeared, and which were "enlightened by Philoſophy* [c]." But his Lordſhip goes further; he not only confeſſeth that this learned age was favourable to the SUCCESS of *Chriſtianity*, but that it was moſt adapted to it's GENIUS; ſince, thoſe who publiſhed it choſe rather that it ſhould be ſubmitted to the

SERM. XV.

[c] *Bolingbroke's works*, Quarto Edition. Vol. iv. p. 373, 4.

SERM. XV. examination of REASON, than forced upon the world by the weight of AUTHORITY. "It is plain (ſays his Lordſhip) "that the firſt publiſhers of *Chriſti-* "*anity* did not reſt the cauſe primarily "or ſolely on AUTHORITY of any kind. "It is plain that they ſubmitted the Go- "ſpel, and the Authority of thoſe who "publiſhed it, to the examination of "REASON, as any other ſyſtem even of "divine Philoſophy ought to be ſubmit- "ted [d]."

After this, to talk of any real advantage the Goſpel can gain by *ignorance*, or any real hurt it can receive from *knowledge*, is reckoning much upon the advantage of favourable hearers.

Another *preſumption* that Knowledge is not injurious to the intereſts of Religion, was the later conduct of the MINISTERS OF THE GOSPEL. The noble Writer, whoſe ſuggeſtion I am here oppoſing, hath thought fit to repreſent them as a ſet of knaviſh Politicians combined together to ſupport Revelation as the beſt ſyſtem to advance the

[d] Vol. iv. p. 267.

Wealth

Wealth and Power of their Order. But whether Revelation be a divine Truth or a commentitious Fable; whether the Order be Miniſters of Religion, or Confederates in Iniquity, it is at leaſt certain, that men who have devoted their time and talents to the ſervice of this Inſtitution muſt needs be beſt acquainted with it's nature, and with the means moſt proper to advance, or to retard it's intereſts. And this their ſuperior knowledge will admit of no diſpute, if, as is pretended, Revelation was their INVENTION: for they could not but be very intimate with the work of their own hands. Now it is remarkable, that when divers accidental cauſes had concurred to revive learning in the Weſt (not the leaſt of which was the protection and encouragement the Clergy afforded to the exiled Greeks) this Order was amongſt the firſt, as ſoon as ever it had given any ſigns of returning life, to cheriſh and ſupport it; to raiſe and reſtore it to it's ancient dignity and ſplendor. One amongſt them in particular having done more in this ſervice than all the Laity of that age together. I need not tell the SERM. XV.

SERM. XV. learned hearer, that I mean ERASMUS[e]. The inference I would draw from it is this, That had the Clergy, who beſt underſtood the mutual effects which *Learning* and *Revelation* muſt have upon one an-

[e] There is one circumſtance in the life and character of this excellent Perſon, that diſtinguiſhes him with advantage from moſt others, even of the greateſt eminence in Letters; and will for ever endear his memory to the Wiſe and Good. His zeal for the intereſts of Learning and Religion was equally warm and conſtant. To ſerve the firſt, he began with diſcrediting the MONKS, the mortal Enemies of reviving Letters. He puſhed them with all the vigour of his wit; and ſeemed reſolved to give no quarter to that ignorance which was become the mother and nurſe of all the bigotry, and ſuperſtition, which moſt diſhonoured and defiled Religion. In this attack on the eſtabliſhed barbarity of the times, he ſucceeded ſo well, as to bring good Letters into faſhion: to which he gave a new ſplendor by preparing for the preſs correct Editions of many of the beſt antient Writers both eccleſiaſtical and prophane. But his labours were not yet ended. He had a new adventure to undertake. He lived to ſee the *zeal* for Letters, which he had been ſo inſtrumental in promoting, carry the VIRTUOSI of *Italy* into an oppoſite and yet more ridiculous extreme than the *monkiſh*, when he firſt ſet upon laughing ignorance out of the world. The Italian Latin Writers

other, been apprehenſive that LETTERS would prove injurious to the FAITH, which it was, it ſeems, their *peculiar* intereſt to ſupport; ſo cunning Politicians had never acted ſo abſurd a part as to promote Learn-

SERM. XV.

(and almoſt every body then was a Latin Writer) from their dread and horror of monkiſh barbariſms, would uſe no word, not even when they treated of the higheſt myſteries of Religion, but what had been conſecrated as it were in the Capitol, and diſpenſed to them by the ſacred hand of TULLY. Eraſmus obſerved the growth of this folly with the greater concern, as he thought he ſaw under all their fondneſs for the Language of old *Rome*, a growing libertinage, which diſpoſed them to think ſlightly of the Chriſtian FAITH; and, what is ſtill ſtranger, gave them even a reverence for the abſurdities of the old Gentile worſhip. Now, this oppoſite extreme, he thought it equally his duty to expoſe: which he hath done in that immortal work intitled CICERONIANUS: and done ſo effectually, that the public was ſoon brought back to that juſt medium which he had been all his life endeavouring to mark out for their obſervance: Purity, but not Pedantry, in Letters; and Zeal, but not Bigotry, in Religion. In a word, the employing his talents of genius and literature on ſubjects of general importance declared him a TRUE CRITIC; and his oppoſing the extremes of all Parties in their turns declared him an HONEST MAN.

SERM. XV.

ing when it was in their power to ſuppreſs it. Yet they did ſupport it. And, with no great aſſiſtance from the Laity, advanced that degree of eminence in which our Fathers have ſeen it.

I know it hath been pretended, that in this ſervice the Clergy were paſſive; that they entered into it with reluctance; that they went heavily with the current, which then ran ſtrongly to the advancement of Science. But they who ſay ſo, know little of the hiſtory of thoſe times. It is true, the poor *Monks* in the midſt of all their blindneſs, ſaw well enough the havock Learning would make throughout all the quarters of Superſtition: and therefore employed their weak endeavours to ſtop the progreſs of it. But what was the iſſue? They made themſelves doubly ridiculous: for the learned Clergy were not now content to deſpiſe, they found it neceſſary to expoſe, their ignorance. Soon afterwards indeed the world was ſurpriſed with the ſudden riſe of a more formidable Order of Religious, the JESUITS; who perhaps had been well pleaſed to have acted their parts like their predeceſſors, in the

the ſhade of cloiſtered ignorance. But the matter was then too far gone. Theſe Politic Fathers, if you will, were indeed forced to ſwim with the ſtream: but they went in it with ſo good a grace that few have more effectually contributed to the advancement of Learning. In a word, this was the *general Spirit* of the Chriſtian Clergy; both of the Friends and Enemies of *Rome*, that from the time in which *Letters* gave the firſt ſymptom of recovered life, to the preſent, they cheriſhed them with a zeal and aſſiduity next to what they uſed in the ſupport and defenſe of their more peculiar charge, *Religion*.

What then muſt we conclude, but that they thought, and ſtill think, that the Chriſtian Faith is much benefited by the application of human Learning to its ſervice, They were not miſtaken, as I ſhall now endeavour to ſhew.

For, from theſe PRESUMPTIONS, I proceed to a DIRECT PROOF, that as the infant growth of the Goſpel was not retarded by that flouriſhing ſtate of Knowledge which ſaw it in it's birth; ſo the revived Knowledge of theſe latter ages did greatly

ſupport

SERM. XV.

ſupport the eſtabliſhed honours of Revelation, by illuſtrating it's primeval Truths.

Since the more careful cultivation of natural and moral Science, PHILOSOPHY, HISTORY and ANTIQUITY, have all contributed to ſpread a new light over the evidences of it.

In *natural Philoſophy*, more exact enquiries have been made into the contents of the ſuperior covering of the terraqueous Globe; the peculiarities of whoſe arrangements give the ſtrongeſt evidence to the Moſaic account of the *Deluge* [f]. And the immortal Theory of *Newton* abſolutely demonſtrates that intimate relation which *Moſes* ſpeaks of, between the *Creator* and his *work*.

[f] The contents of the Ocean are found, in a petrified ſtate, all over the terreſtrial part of the Globe; and in places moſt diſtant from thoſe in which they were firſt formed. I ſay they are found over all the earth, but not in all ſorts of ſoils indifferently. And from theſe two circumſtances conſidered together, an inconteſtable proof of the truth of the Moſaic relation, I think, may be deduced. Had theſe adventitious foſſils not been found in every quarter of the Globe, we could not conclude the Deluge

Prophane

Prophane Hiſtory, the more nicely it is examined, the more clearly it diſcovers, through all its corruptions, an exact and ſurprizing conformity with the *ſacred*: It affords a vaſt number of precious Monuments that ſerve to illuſtrate thoſe obſcurities in holy Writ, which time and the univerſal change of manners, both Social and Civil, have unavoidably occaſioned amongſt men. SERM. XV.

The Science of *Antiquity*, which is properly converſant with the manners and cuſtoms of ancient times, ſupports the general credit of ſacred Scripture by illuſtrating thoſe internal marks that prove the high antiquity to which they pretend.

to have been *univerſal:* and had they been found in all kind of ſoils indifferently, we might ſuppoſe them to be (what they were once commonly thought) the natives of thoſe narrow beds in which they are diſcovered, and a kind of *luſus naturæ*. But when we ſee them ſpread over every climate, and yet only in ſuch ſoils as are proper for the preſervation of *foreign bodies*, we rightly conclude them to be the depoſite of a Deluge of waters which covered the whole face of the Earth.

The

SERM. XV.

The Science of *morals* hath been more ſucceſsfully purſued, and more happily inveſtigated, ſince the revival of Letters, than at any other period whatever. And this, reflected upon Goſpel-morality, hath thrown ſuch a luſtre on the purity of it's nature, on the utility of it's general direction, and on the truth of revelation principles, as ſhews it's original to be indeed divine.

True Knowledge being thus friendly to the FAITH, you will naturally expect, I ſuppoſe, to find the great Maſters of Science confirming what is here ſaid, by their warm attachment to REVELATION. The expectation is not unreaſonable. And you have the pleaſure to ſee every great name amongſt the Laity, ſuch as BACON, BOYLE, NEWTON, GROTIUS, SELDEN, SIDENHAM, PASCHAL, and LOCKE, no leſs reſpectable for their ſincere belief of *Chriſtianity* than for their profound Knowledge in their ſeveral Profeſſions. Nor ſhould you ſuffer yourſelves to ſuſpect that the weight of this argument is at all diminiſhed if there be others, accounted in the rank of Learned men, who have affected to think ſlightly of the

the Religion of their Country. For when the matter is to be decided by Authority, Hobbes I ſuppoſe will not be oppoſed to Newton, or Spinoza to Bacon. Much leſs would any one compare Toland with Grotius, or Tindal with Selden, or Coward and Morgan with Harvey and Sidenham. SERM. XV.

If then true Science hath thus advanced the credit and glory of REVELATION, by the nature of it's principles, and the ſentiments of its profeſſors; and if yet there hath been, ever ſince the revival of LETTERS, a gradual defection from the Faith, we muſt ſeek for the cauſes of this Apoſtaſy in ſomething elſe than in a SUPERABUNDANCE OF KNOWLEDGE. And on a fair inquiry, I perſuade myſelf, they will not be difficult to find.

We have juſt ſeen, how one diviſion of the learned world, into the GREAT and the SMALL *Philoſophers*, contributes to the credit of Religion: another, into the MORAL and the IMMORAL, would no leſs ſupport it's honour, were it not too invidious a taſk to oppoſe theſe to one another, by name. But the various inſtances may be ſafely truſted to every man's

SERM. XV.

man's own recollection. For who hath not obſerved, that in the learned world every the moſt virtuous perſon hath been moſt eminent for his adherence to *Revelation:* and that ſuch who have diſtinguiſhed themſelves in the cauſe of *free-thinking* have been generally as remarkable for the free indulgence of their paſſions. Nor is it at all ſtrange, that, when men have nothing to hope, and much to fear from a Religion propoſed to them as true, they ſhould for their own eaſe be willing to find, or, if that fails, to ſuſpect it to be falſe. And when once men are in this diſpoſition, they will never want objections to FACTS eſtabliſhed by the fulleſt evidence; or to DOCTRINES ſupported by the ſtrongeſt reaſoning.

But, it will be ſaid, perhaps, "Why did not this natural, tho' unreaſonable, prejudice appear ſooner? Men have been always vicious; and have ever ſince the firſt appearance of *Chriſtianity* been made uneaſy in their vices."

The fact is true. But the anſwer to the queſtion eaſy. We are to conſider that, for many ages preceding the reſtoration

ſtoration of Learning, SUPERSTITION had invented a thouſand expedients to evade the threats of Religion againſt a wicked life; to reconcile the difference; and to make Salvation conſiſtent with the practice of habitual immorality. So that bad men were under no temptation to quarrel with the evidences of their Faith, in order to enjoy their vices in quiet. SERM. XV.

But the caſe is much altered ſince Religion, by the aſſiſtance of revived Learning, hath been reſtored to it's ancient purity. The original terms of the Goſpel Covenant between God and man are ſeen to be immoveable: That *habitual crimes* can be no otherwiſe atoned for but by *ſincere repentance:* And that the very eſſence of *repentance* conſiſts in forſaking vice and returning to the actual practice of virtue.

However, admitting ſo rare a phenomenon as an Unbeliever of real learning and reaſonable morals; it would be abſurd to aſcribe this to his ſuperior Knowledge, when ſo natural an account may be given of this traverſe, from his learned paſſions and infirmities. A *progreſs in arts* is far from working

SERM. XV. working that change in the heart and affections which a *progreſs in the practice of Religion* is wont to do. The higher you advance in FAITH, the eaſier you ſubdue, and the more ſkilfully you balance your appetites and affections: but too often, the further you advance in SCIENCE, the more you inflame thoſe appetites and render them intractable. PRIDE and VANITY grow ſpontaneouſly out of the conſciouſneſs, whether real or imaginary, of ſuperior knowledge. As theſe paſſions render us impatient of inſtruction, and ſcarcely ſubmitting to be *ſelf-taught*, ſo they are moſt gratified when we quit the opinions of the croud. "If all my Learning (ſays ſuch a one to himſelf) only leads me to think with the *Many*, and to have my ſcience confounded in the maſs of popular opinions, how ſhall I be diſtinguiſhed with advantage from the ignorant and illiterate? To give ſuch people a due eſteem for my importance, they ſhould ſee that Learning leads men to concluſions, very diſtant from common ſentiments. Theſe viſions, light and fantaſtic as they are, have, I am afraid, led many ſcholars to affect a ſingularity

gularity in thinking, which their better judg- SERM.
ments, if not their very hearts, condemned. XV.

This infirmity of learned heads did not eſcape the noble Writer, whoſe maxim is now under conſideration; when, ſpeaking of what he calls *the reſurrection of Letters*, he ſaid, "In the darkneſs of ignorance, ſu-"perſtition prevailed: in the light of know-"ledge, overweening curioſity, the offspring "of SELF-CONCEIT; as ſelf-conceit is of "PRIDE [g]." And in another place, "As "men advance in Knowledge, their *ſelf-con-*"*ceit* is apt to increaſe [h]."

But if ſimple vanity be thus ſtrong, how powerful will it prove when joined to warm reſentments for neglected merit or injurious ſuſpicions? I wiſh I could not ſay, there have been ſome, even of thoſe conſecrated to the ſervice of Religion, who have ſuffered thoſe paſſions and reſentments to carry them into the quarters of the Enemy.

But as to the Learned of that time, many circumſtances concurred to indiſpoſe them towards the Religion of their Country. They went to the cultivation of the *new Learning*, as it was then called, with a

[g] Vol. iv. p. 170. [h] Vol. iv. p. 171.

SERM. XV.

ſort of enthuſiaſm. They were promiſed wonderful things from it. And nothing could more flatter their paſſions than to fancy they had diſcovered by it, that the Religion, under which ſenſe and conſcience had lain ſo long oppreſſed, was falſe; a prejudice they would be very ready to indulge out of revenge to the *Monks*, who employed all their Authority to diſcredit and diſcountenance the *new Learning*, and all the favourers of it.

Again, there are ſome Sciences little converſant in that kind of proof by which the truths of Religion are ſupported; ſuch as the ſimple and mixed Mathematics, which labour only in ſtrict demonſtration. What wonder then, that the ſimple Demonſtrator [i], unuſed to calculate the numerous combinations that conſtitute the various degrees of moral probability, ſhould, when the evi-

[i] "Les Geométres mêmes (ſays a very able judge of theſe matters) qui devroient mieux connoître les avantages de l'analiſe, que les autres Philoſophes, donnent ſouvent la preference à la ſintheſe. Auſſi, quand ils ſortent de leurs calculs pour entrer dans les recherches d'une nature differente, on ne leur trouve plus la même clarté, la même preciſion, ni la même *etendue*

dence

dence for Religion came before him, appear little fitted, and leſs diſpoſed to eſtimate its force? SERM. XV.

To the *incapacity*, which an addiction to certain Sciences induceth, may be added the *prejudices* which certain circumſtances in the ſtate of the two Religious parties, that divide the weſtern world, were apt to occaſion. In the CHURCH OF ROME, the groſs corruptions; and amongſt PROTESTANTS, their endleſs diviſions into ſects and factions. The *corruptions* were apt to make doubting men ſuſpect *Revelation* to be only a knaviſh Fable; the *diviſions*, that it was only an enthuſiaſtic dream.

Hitherto it appears that it is not Learning, but the infirmities of thoſe who profeſs Learning, which produce that infidelity whoſe origin is the ſubject of our inquiry.

d'eſprit. Nous avons quatre metaphiſiciens celebres, DESCARTES, MALLEBRANCHE, LEIBNITZ, et LOCKE. Le dernier eſt le ſeul qui ne fut pas Geometre, et de combien n'eſt il pas ſuperieur aux trois autres?" *Eſſai ſur l'origine des connoiſſances humaines*, 2de partie. p. 289, 90.

SERM. XV.

But certainly, it's largeſt ſource is *pretended learning* and *ſuperficial-knowledge*; the very defect and want of that, to which his Lordſhip aſcribes the preſent propenſity to unbelief. In a ſtate of *ſimple ignorance* men hardly get ſo far as into the confines of doubt: which was their caſe before the *reſurrection of Letters*: Superficial knowledge ſoon brings them thither, and ſupplies them with many ſhallow objections againſt Religion: and this has been the ſtate of things ever ſince. And the vanity that accompanies learned purſuits being ſtronger and more unchecked in the entrance to Science than in the more advanced ſtages of it, as having but little of that *conſcious ignorance* to counterbalance it, which increaſes in proportion to our progreſs, the doubts and objections of the half learned will ſoon terminate in ſettled infidelity. Hence it is we find the leaders and profeſſors of Free-thinking to have been generally of this claſs of men. And hence it is, that there are now much fewer Unbelievers amongſt eminent men in the learned Profeſſions than at the revival of Letters. For as Science has kept advancing,

advancing, and the true theory of nature opened, men's hard thoughts of Revelation have gradually leſſened and ſubſided. The Philoſophy of *Ariſtotle*, when the Schools firſt got to its ſource in the ſixteenth Century, inclined the Italian literati to *Atheiſm:* and the new inventions of *Deſcartes* in the ſeventeenth, diſpoſed the French to *Naturaliſm.* They have both now given place to the true theory of nature. And Newton, as well by his doctrine as example, has taught the Philoſophic world to believe and tremble. Nor is the preſent overflow of infidelity any objection to the truth of this obſervation. For, as to the great body of unbelievers, it is neither deep, nor yet ſuperficial, Learning that gives the bias. This, indeed, may form the *leaders:* but it is FASHION only (as in every other folly) that perverts the *followers.* SERM. XV.

For juſt as in the times of IGNORANT DEVOTION, *believing* was the mode; ſo in theſe our days of LEARNED INDIFFERENCE it is *free-thinking.* It is not much nor little learning, it is not know-

SERM. XV.

ledge, nor yet ignorance, which influences the body of mankind in their Opinions, any more than in their dreſs; it is CREDITABLE IMITATION, the thing we call FASHION.

In a word, if we conſider LEARNING in the ſenſe of a *diſcipline for the improvement of the underſtanding*, it has at all times been of infinite advantage to REVELATION. Yet it muſt not be denied, that it may ſometimes be ſo circumſtanced as to produce much miſchief. I have ſhewn that both antient and modern Learning have contributed to the propagation and eſtabliſhment of the Chriſtian Religion: yet it is but too true that the one, in the *genius of it's Doctrines*, and the other in the *mode of it's propagation*, have, with great good, accidentally occaſioned variety of evil.

The *metaphyſical principles* of antient Philoſophy were deſtructive of the great Doctrines of our Faith [k]; which made St. *Paul* caution the Churches, leſt any ſhould

[k] *Divine Legation*, Book III. Sect. 4.

ſpoil

ſpoil them through Philoſophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men [1]. SERM. XV.

The *mode of propagation* has done all the miſchief in theſe latter times. The uſe of Letters among the Antients, even in the flouriſhing ſtate of them, was confined to the FEW; who, by their ſtations in life, were enabled to make a real and a reaſonable improvement. But ſince the invention of printing, the *inſtruments of Knowledge* have grown ſo common as to get into the hands of the PEOPLE: where, inſtead of improving the underſtandings, they have had no other effect than to inflame the paſſions: of which, RELIGION, SOCIETY, and even LETTERS themſelves, now feel the miſerable effects.

On the whole then we ſee, how ridiculous as well as malicious the noble perſon's obſervation is, "That Revelation owes it's credit to ignorance; and loſes ground as Learning and Science advance againſt it." For what there is of fact, on which he ſupports his obſervation, is only this, that *there is a greater number of Unbelievers amongſt the*

[1] Col. ii. 8.

profeſſors

SERM. XV. *profeſſors of Chriſtianity ſince the revival of Letters than before.* But if this inference be juſt, it would hold as well againſt the *being of a God*, as againſt the *truth of Revelation*: for, to one Atheiſt in the Monkiſh times, there were a hundred at the revival of Learning. One degree of ſcience is fitted to diſcover error; and another, to find out the truth. In the interim, the infirmity of our nature betrays us, and in runing from an abſurdity we rarely ſtop till we be got intangled in it's oppoſite.

But the inference is, in every view, ſo groundleſs, that *Chriſtianity* (as we have ſhewn) made it's firſt way againſt the higheſt powers and prejudices, in the very centre of the moſt flouriſhing age of Knowledge.

At the laſt revival of Letters it received the ſtrongeſt aid from human Science; and the ſincereſt homage from the moſt illuſtrious names that ever adorned or cultivated Letters.

The only enemies it found amongſt the Learned were either ſuch as were immoral in their lives; or were tied down by a falſe Philoſophy to inveterate prejudices; or were carried away by vanity; or were incompetent

petent judges by their unacquaintance with the nature of the proofs; or laſtly ſuch who *pretended only* to a Knowledge they indeed had not. SERM. XV.

And as to the groſs body of licentious men, Learning had no concern in the affair; Theſe were entirely under the ſway and influence of FASHION.

From all this we conclude, that let INFIDELITY be riſen to what height it will, it is not yet of that kind which brings any real diſcredit to REVELATION.

The Rejectors of it, therefore, would do well to conſider the grounds on which they ſtand; and what account they will be able give to the great Judge of all the earth at his ſecond coming, for having contributed to that horrid defection which he hath foretold will be then found amongſt men.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

CONTAINING

Three SERMONS

PREACHED and PUBLISHED

On the Occaſion of

The late REBELLION,

in MDCCXLV.

AND

A DISCOURSE

ON

The Nature of the MARRIAGE-UNION.

SERMON I.

Occaſioned by

The UNNATURAL REBELLION.

Preached and publiſhed in the Month of *November* 1745, while the Rebel-Army was in *England*.

1 Ep. PETER ii. 17.

FEAR GOD, HONOUR THE KING.

SERM. I.

THE holy Apoſtle has, with great propriety, joined together theſe two precepts of our duty to GOD and the CIVIL MAGISTRATE; as well knowing what mutual influence Religion and Society have, and what mutual aid they beſtow, upon one another: that the truth and purity of Faith preſcribe and recommend the rules

SERM. I.

of civil juſtice; and that a free and equal Government favours and encourages the profeſſion of the truth.

But not only the genius and diſpoſition of Religion and Government diſpoſe them to this friendly intercourſe of good offices; but the actual adminiſtrations of their reſpective powers are always imparting mutual aſſiſtance to one another. The State lending its coercive power to reſtrain and puniſh that vice and immorality which renders all religious profeſſion, contaminated with it, vain before God; and the Church employing the terrors of the Lord to inforce obedience to the Magiſtrate's lawful commands: teaching men ſubjection, *not only for wrath, but alſo for conſcience ſake.*

But this is a truth, which, I preſume, will eaſily find it's way to an *Engliſh* audience; who now actually poſſeſs and enjoy all thoſe bleſſings which ariſe from ſo natural and ſacred an Union. For by the *equity* of our *civil* Conſtitution the *conſciences of men* are not only left free, but protected in their liberty: and by the truth and power of our *religious*, the *rights of citizens* have been more than once ſupported, when threatened by arbitrary and illegal power.

But

But then, tho' true and pure Religion, and a juſt and equal Government, be thus fruitful of mutual good; Superſtition and Deſpotic power are, on the contrary, as productive of mutual evil; inceſſantly inflaming one another's diſorders, till they ſink the wretched victims of their tyranny into the loweſt ſtate of miſery and diſtreſs. SERM. I.

For when once Superſtition hath violated the rights of conſcience, then, in order to diſpoſe the civil magiſtrate to become the executioner of their decrees, or, if they fail in that, to be an unconcerned Spectator of their violence, they preach up his DIVINE RIGHT, and a power from Heaven like their own: with a free invitation to make as bold with property, as they have done with conſcience. On the other ſide, whenever the civil Magiſtrate aims to play the tyrant, he naturally begins with giving up ſenſe and piety for a prey to Superſtition and Church cenſures; in order to ſave labour, and to receive one half of the man already ſubdued to his hands.

In a word, that Religion, which renders void the firſt precept of my text, by taking away the *fear of God*, will always be for

SERM. I. introducing a form of Government which renders void the ſecond, by taking away all *honour from the King*. And ſo, reciprocally, will an *honourleſs King* promote the worſhip of a *fearleſs God*. And for the truth of this, we need look no further than upon the inſolent attempts, juſt now making, to overturn our happy conſtitution in Church and State, and, in its ſtead, to introduce POPERY and ARBITRARY POWER.

But of this complicated monſter, now crawling from the North, which, amphiſbena like, has at either end a Head, it is ſufficient to obſerve, that tho' Each may lead and follow in it's turn, yet they are ſtill inſeparable: and that between them both, they effectually make void this great Chriſtian ſummary of human conduct, to *fear God and honour the King*: POPERY entirely effacing from the *minds* of men all religious fear of the Deity; and ARBITRARY POWER tearing from their *affections*, all manly honour for the Magiſtrate.

To begin therefore with POPERY, under it's beſt face, that of a *Religion*, though it be, in truth, little other than a mere *Antichriſtian policy*.

This Religion ſtrips Chriſtianity of the *fear of God*, Firſt, by transferring much of the worſhip due to the Creator upon the creature, in their idolatrous adoration of dead men; by whoſe merits and mediation the anger of the offended Deity is ſuppoſed to be appeaſed, and the unalterable terms of juſtice, between God and man, removed or relaxed: The very ſame idolatry, which, the Apoſtle *Paul* aſſures us, had baniſh'd all *fear* of the Deity out of the Pagan world, when the *wrath of God was revealed* by Jeſus *from Heaven againſt all ungodlineſs and unrighteouſneſs of men, who hold the truth in unrighteouſneſs.* That is, who mixed with their knowledge of the true God, the moſt abominable idolatries, *and changed his glory into an image made like to corruptible man, &c.* A practice, which, if it begins not in a contempt of the Deity, muſt neceſſarily end in it, and take away all *fear of God's* JEALOUSY. SERM. I.

A ſecond way, in which *Popery* takes away the *fear of God*, is in it's doctrine and diſcipline of penitence. We are taught, as well by nature as the Goſpel, that ſin is ſo offenſive to God's purity as to *provoke his*

SERM. I. *wrathful indignation* upon tranſgreſſors. Hence, the *fear of God's* diſpleaſure tends to keep men in their duty; and to call them back to it, when they have tranſgreſſed, by a ſeaſonable repentance.

Now, in the *church of Rome*, the doctrine of attrition with abſolution, roots out all this holy *fear*, by teaching men, that an ill-ſpent life, is to be attoned by ſimple ſorrow, and the prieſt's forgiveneſs, at the hour of death: Whereby, all *fear of God's* JUSTICE becomes evaded.

A third way, by which Popery takes away the *fear of God*, is in transferring his rule and government in the Church, upon a mere man, aſſuming to himſelf all power both in heaven and in earth. And he adminiſters this power with the ſame extravagant impiety with which he uſurped it; by giving indulgences to ſin, and diſpenſations from the moſt ſolemn obligations of morality. So that ſuch an exerciſe of Church Authority cannot but work out of the minds of men all *fear of God's* DOMINION.

A fourth way, by which Popery takes away the *fear of God*, is in its tyranny over conſci-

conſcience, called ſubmiſſion to the *Holy See.* It is the Goſpel-doctrine, that God alone is the Judge of conſcience; that it is accountable only to him; and that to bring it before another Tribunal is to uſurp upon the rights of the Divinity. For *who art thou,* ſays the Apoſtle *Paul, that judgeſt another man's ſervant? to his own maſter he ſtandeth or falleth.* Yet hath this unchriſtian Church, in defiance of the *divine,* and in oppoſition to the maxims of *human* laws, erected a COURT OF INQUISITION, which impriſons, ſtarves, and burns all who ſet not their opinions by thoſe of the *Holy See.* Now, amongſt the numerous evils of this infernal butchery, this is not the leaſt, that it has a natural tendency to root out all *fear of God:* For Hypocriſy (which is the only genuine offspring of Force) familiarizing it's maſk to the face of Heaven, ſoon wears out of the mind all *fear of the divine* OMNISCIENCE, intent only on deceiving theſe more dreaded tyrants over conſcience. SERM. I.

Thus we ſee, by how many various ways the *fear of God,* which is the ſoul of piety, is weakened and rendered void by this daring

SERM. I. ring Impoſtor, who uſurps the reverend name of the *holy catholick Church.*

It's inſeparable companion, DESPOTIC POWER, which generally follows it, but now, indeed, ſeems to lead the way, under it's moſt hideous form of a bloody and unnatural rebellion, tends equally to deſtroy all *honour* due to *Kings.*

Let us conſider from whence the *honour* due to that ſacred character is naturally derived: and how inevitably arbitrary power tendeth to deſtroy it.

The firſt ground of *honour* is, that a KING, who conſiders the people, as his CHILDREN, of his family and houſhold, is inceſſantly employed in feeding, ſupporting, and enriching thoſe committed to his care. So that gratitude, which requires all the returns of filial duty and affection, gives him *honour, as to a common father.* On the other hand, a TYRANT, who regards his ſubjects as his SLAVES, born for the gratification of all his impotent purpoſes, is only ſollicitous how to make the moſt of their blood and ſweat: the fruits of which he ſquanders away in wild projects of depopulating ambition, or in his more deſtructive habits

habits of luxury and pleaſure: So that, in- SERM.
ſtead of *honour*, his actions repay him with I.
deſerved averſion and CONTEMPT.

Another ground of *honour* is the equal protection a *King* affords to all his ſubjects; not ſuffering his people to be oppreſſed in their religious rights by cruel or intolerant Churchmen; or, in their civil, by proud and overbearing Nobles; which gives him *honour as their common protector*. The *Tyrant*, on the contrary, who wants the aſſiſtance of Superſtition to ſupport his illegal prerogative, and the connivance of the Powerful, in the unjuſt exerciſe of it; delivers up his people, for a prey to Both; that himſelf may direct and preſide in the common pillage; which muſts needs turn all eſteem and *honour* into hatred and DETESTATION.

Another ground of *honour* is, that the rule which the King preſcribes to the exerciſe of his power is the old, eſtabliſhed, and well known Laws of the realm; by which the people are ſecured in the freedom of their perſons, and in the enjoyment of their poſſeſſions. Hence the *King becomes honoured as the common judge*, the avenger of wrong and oppreſſion. On the other hand, the

Tyrant,

SERM. I. *Tyrant*, by making his *will and pleaſure* the rule of his adminiſtration, impriſons and confiſcates without legal complaint or forfeiture; which expoſing liberty and property a prey to court ſycophants, reduces all *honour* to a SERVILE FEAR.

The laſt ground of *honour* is, the *King's* owning himſelf created by the People, and for their ſake[a]: The end of his office, being the public good: So that he is *honoured by them as their common benefactor*. A *Tyrant*, on the contrary, claims his right from Heaven, or Nature, or Conqueſt, or, in a word, from any thing, rather than that from whence only a free obedience can ariſe; and conſequently holds the People made for the gratification of his pleaſure, and the ſupport of his magnificence; and that, when he condeſcends to employ himſelf in their ſervice, 'tis merely of his princely grace and favour; which turns all *honour* into jealouſy and DISTRUST.

Thus, here again, we ſee, how *arbitrary power*, ſo eſſentially different from our happy Conſtitution, deprives the Magiſtrate of all

[a] Rex detur propter regnum, et non regnum propter Regem. *Forteſcue, de Laud. Leg. Ang.* c. 37.

civil

civil honour, by making him unworthy of it; and leaving nothing in its place but contempt, averſion, jealouſy, and ſlaviſh fear. SERM. I.

When we are therefore bid by the Apoſtle PETER to *honour the King*, we muſt conclude, he previouſly ſuppoſes, that we have had the courage to procure for ourſelves ſuch a Conſtitution as eſtabliſheth a *King worthy of honour*; or, at leaſt, that we have the grace to preſerve and ſupport what our anceſtors' courage hath procured for us. For if, where the Apoſtle bids us *fear God*, he means that we ſhould adhere to the great Lord and Governor of the univerſe, in oppoſition to thoſe dumb idols, which it was the purpoſe of *Goſpel-holineſs* to root out; then certainly, where he bids us *honour the King*, he muſt needs mean a legitimate Magiſtrate, in oppoſition to a lawleſs Tyrant, ſo contrary to the true ſpirit of *goſpel-liberty*. And St. PAUL, where he exhorts men to civil obedience, defines this lawful Magiſtrate to be one, who *beareth not the ſword in vain—A terror not to good works but to the evil—A miniſter of God to us for good—An avenger to execute wrath upon*

SERM. I. *upon him that doth evil*: the very deſcription of our own conſtitutional Monarch. In a word, If it were the intent of the Holy Spirit, in the precept of *fearing God*, that we ſhould ſupport Religion in the purity of the Goſpel: then certainly it was his intent, in the precept of *honouring the King*, to recommend to us a legal Government, which only can ſupport Religion in that purity.

Hence we ſee, that to *fear God and honour the King* is, in other words, to ſupport our holy Religion againſt *popiſh Superſtition*; and our equable government againſt *Arbitrary power*. Precepts never out of ſeaſon to recommend to free Men and Chriſtians: but, in this time of public danger, when both are ſo inſolently threatened, and, in them, every thing that is dear and valuable to honeſt men, the duty of our miniſtry calls upon us, with all our power, to inforce them.

If therefore, my Brethren, you have yet in your hearts, any ſentiments of true Religion, any feeling for the love of your Country; if you be *Chriſtians* any more than by profeſſion; if you be *Britons* any more than by name; if you have the piety,

ty, as well as reaſon of Proteſtants; if you have the virtue, as well as the rights and privileges of Free men, you will now *ſtand faſt in the liberty in which Chriſt has ſet you free*, and in which the Holy Spirit, by my text, exhorts you to perſevere. SERM. I.

You will drive far from you the yoke of *Rome*, now ready to be once more caſt about your necks. A yoke, which your forefathers could not bear, even when uſe had made it habitual; and ignorance had ſhut them up from the ſight of Truth and Liberty. But You, who have a clear view, as well as a free choice, of good and evil, will doubtleſs prefer Goſpel light to the Antichriſtian kingdom of darkneſs. You will, doubtleſs, prefer liberty of conſcience to blind obedience, or the dungeons and fires of an Inquiſition; You will prefer piety to ſuperſtition, virtue to fanaticiſm, your bible to the maſs-book, and ſenſe to nonſenſe.

You will employ all your virtue to oppoſe the inſults of *France*, which your forefathers, at all times, ſo well knew how to repel: You will rather chuſe to truſt your liberties and properties to laws of your own making, than to be beholden, for the precarious

SERM. I. carious enjoyment of them, to the *good will and pleaſure* of that monſter in the creation, that deſpoiler of God's Works, an arbitrary and an unlimited Maſter.

In a word, would you aſpire to be virtuous; would you be willing to be thought religious; would you continue to be happy here, or would you entertain hopes of happineſs hereafter, you muſt now, all of you, in your ſeveral ſtations, concur to the vigorous ſupport of that glorious Conſtitution to which you have the honour to belong. The pride and confidence of our friends! The envy of our neighbours! The terror of our enemies, and the admiration of mankind! Happy nation! the nurſe of heroes, the ſchool of ſages, the ſeminary of holy martyrs, the diſtinguiſhed favorite of Heaven! But how momentary are all theſe bleſſings, when freedom is once ſeparated, and divorced from virtue! for, according to the generous ſaying of an ancient freeman, *That very day which ſees a man a ſlave takes away half his virtue.* But above all, let me remind the benevolent man, that tho' we ourſelves be the firſt and greateſt, yet we ſhall not be the only ſufferers by ſo terrible a reverſe,

reverſe. The effects of it will be felt by the remoteſt nations. *Britain* hath now the diſtinguiſhed glory of being the Depoſitary, as it were, of civil and religious Freedom, for the reſt of mankind: And while we continue faithful to our truſt, there are ſtill hopes that the degenerate ſons of men may, ſome time or other, catch this noble fire from us, and vindicate their ravaged birthright. But, in our deſtruction, Liberty itſelf expires; and human nature will deſpair of evermore regaining its firſt and original dignity. SERM. I.

Theſe indeed are motives conſecrated to ſuch only whom the ſacred ſpirit of Liberty inſpires. However, if theſe be too exalted for the times of a general luxury and corruption (the unhappy effects of illuſed freedom) there are yet other conſiderations, and ſuch as are abundantly ſufficient, to animate thoſe who have not loſt all ſenſe of Manhood, along with their Virtue and Religion.

For when ever had an *Engliſhman* higher cauſe of reſentment, than at preſent, when he ſees *Spain*, whoſe impotency we have long deſpiſed, and *France*, whoſe violence

SERM. I. we have never failed to repell, preſume to impoſe, upon a powerful Nation, a mean ſervile, tributary Tyrant; and to attempt the dethroning an illuſtrious Family, raiſed by Providence, for the Head of the Proteſtant intereſt abroad; and appointed by a willing People, the Protector of *Britiſh* liberty, at home?

But, what ſo juſt an indignation may fail to effect, the ſecret ſenſe of ignominy and diſhonour will amply ſupply. Should we not bluſh to have it ſaid, that a mighty Kingdom, a People that ſtill gives laws to the Main, and has long held the ballance of Power between contending Empires, was ſuddenly overturned by a rabble of ſuperſtitious ruffians, of mountain robbers, of half-arm'd and half-ſtarv'd barbarians, with a wild and deſperate Adventurer at their head; and reduced, by the madneſs of theſe miſerable varlets, from the moſt free and happy people upon earth, to be a Province to *France*, a Warehouſe to *Spain*, and a patrimony to the pretended ſucceſſor of St. *Peter*? The very thought of ſo amazing a diſhonour is enough to cover us with confuſion. And certainly, if ever this diſhonour ſhould

befal us, the moſt inclement, the moſt inhoſpitable of our *American* Plantations, would be far too good for us to run into, and hide our coward heads: There we might waſte our wretched days; ſtill more imbitter'd with this cruel reflection, That when LIBERTY, now driven from the Continent, had retired for refuge, and taken ſhelter, in *Great Britain*, we were unable to ſtay her parting footſteps, though ſhe brought with her, all her dowry of religious, of civil, and of ſocial Virtues. SERM. I.

And now, if happily this conſideration be but of power to kindle again any of the ſeeds of old *Engliſh* valour, they may be eaſily excited and blown into a flame by a virtuous *emulation* of our brave and generous Anceſtors. The firſt in *Europe* who ſhook off that very Superſtition and Tyranny with which we are now inſulted; and ever after, with the utmoſt vigour, repelled all the wicked attempts for their re-eſtabliſhment: But never with ſo great hazard and expence as againſt that infatuated Family from whence this Pretender boaſts to have had his birth; and from whence he derives his imaginary title, founded on I know not what jargon of indefeaſible hereditary Right

SERM. I. for the King, and paſſive-obedience and non-reſiſtance for the Subject. A title, which the much provoked reſentment of an injured People hath long ſince with the higheſt juſtice diſſolved and abrogated.

Nor ſhould *Gratitude* loſe its ſhare in waking us from our fatal ſlumber of luxury and pleaſure. The bleſſings thoſe brave men purchaſed for us are ineſtimable, and and the price they paid for them was immenſe. So that the warmeſt return of gratitude is due to the *Manes* of our Benefactors. Let us pay it in that way which moſt becomes us, and would beſt pleaſe them; a vigorous exertion of all our faculties to preſerve the bleſſings they have procured for us.

But if neither ſhame nor gratitude can work upon us to venture any thing for the keeping ourſelves free and happy, yet, at leaſt, *natural affection*, and pity for our Poſterity, (the laſt bar to ignominy in the abſence of virtue) ſhould make us either reſolve to die bravely, or to deliver down unimpaired to our children, that glorious heritage which our provident fore-fathers bequeathed to them, through us. And not ſuffer our cowardice or indolence, at this important juncture, to hazard the intailing upon

upon our wretched offspring, a long ſeries of ignorance, ſuperſtition, want, ſervility, and all the miſeries and diſtreſſes which attend *arbitrary government*, and *Papal communion*. SERM. I.

But if it be the unhappy fate of *England* that no generous motive, worthy the breaſts of men and citizens, can make impreſſion on her ſons, now become inſenſible thro' ſloth and luxury, They may yet, nay They ſhould be applied unto, as Slaves, and awakened with the ſervile dread of puniſhment. A puniſhment as great as it is inevitable! The divine vengeance purſuing them at heels, for their violated oaths and perfidious engagements; when in the face of Heaven, by the moſt ſacred office of Religion they invoked GOD as a witneſs and avenger, and ſwore allegiance to his excellent majeſty KING GEORGE. For natural Religion will teach us, tho' we throw off all reverence for the Revealed, that no crime is more offenſive to the great God of Truth than the breach of public oaths. And civil Hiſtory will inform you, that none is ſo ſpeedily and ſeverely puniſhed. A puniſhment, moſt becoming the juſtice of

SERM. I. Heaven. For the ſanction of an Oath was the only means, amongſt equals, of bringing men into Society; and is ſtill the only means of keeping Societies entire.

But I truſt, that neither Virtue nor Religion will be wanting, on this great occaſion, to repel the ſtorm now gathered over us; how much ſoever the ſtate of both may need amendment. In concluſion, therefore, let me recommend it to men in all ſtations, as one of the moſt general and efficacious means, for the ſucceſsful diſcharge of their duty to the King and Government, religiouſly to implore a long forgotten ſuccour, laughed at by moſt, and ſcarce truſted to by any, *The aſſiſtance of God's Holy Spirit*, to warm our Affections, to purify our Hearts, to enlighten our Underſtandings, to ſtrengthen our Wills, and to ſupply all the weakneſſes and defects of our corrupted Nature; to the glory of God's holy Name, and the good and happineſs of Mankind.

SER-

A SERMON ON THE General FAST DAY, *December* 18, 1745.

SERMON II.

ON

The General FAST DAY, *Dec.* 18, 1745.

Preached and publiſhed while the Rebel-army was in *England*.

JOEL ii. ℣ 20.

I will remove far off from you the northern army, and will drive him into a land barren and deſolate.

GOD, by the prophet JOEL, having denounced againſt a ſinful People, the invaſion of the *Aſſyrians*, together with the fore-runners of that judgment, his *army of locuſts*; at the ſame time, declares, that, on their true repentance, he would drive the Invaders back again into the horrid regions from whence they

SERM. II. they came; and with a ſlaughter as great as their preceeding ravages and deſolation.

Now the apoſtle PAUL tells us, that *whatſoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning; that we, thro' patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope*[a]: By which we underſtand in general, that the like diſpoſition of humiliation before God, of hearty repentance for our ſins, and ſincere reſolution of amendment, are the proper means of enabling us, at this juncture, to drive back the haughty powers of *France*, which now hover over us; together with their fore-runners, this northern army of locuſts; allured hither by the ſcent of prey, becauſe, as the prophet expreſſes it, *The land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them, a deſolate wilderneſs*[b].

Thus far human reaſon, the true interpreter of Scripture, will allow us to infer. But further to conclude of God's dealings with States and Societies from his diſpenſations to the Jewiſh People, will be the occaſion of our turning that Scripture, which, the Apoſtle here tells us, was *written for*

[a] Rom. xv. 4. [b] Joel ii. 3.

our

our learning and inſtruction, to our deluſion and ruin. Yet, from this character given of the Scriptures of the Old Teſtament, in ſeveral places of the Scriptures of the New, men have not only ventured to regulate God's proceeding with Particulars, but alſo to judge of the fate of Kingdoms and Societies, by his adminiſtration of the *Jewiſh* Nation. This hath been the ſource of numberleſs ſuperſtitions. Some of which diſhonour Religion, by derogating from the juſtice of God: while others weaken and diſtract Government, by violating the rights of men. And all of them defeat the rational concluſions of that *learning* and inſtruction which may be found in Scripture; and which is *able to make us wiſe unto ſalvation.* In the number of theſe ſuperſtitions is the popular opinion, That God, in the common government of the world, puniſheth children for the crimes of their parents: A diſpenſation peculiar to the *Jewiſh* Nation; and there indeed adminiſtred with the higheſt equity[c]; but, in the preſent order of things, not to be employed without impinging on God's juſtice. So again,

SERM. II.

[c] See *Div. Leg.* B. v.

that

SERM. II. that other abſurd fancy, which transfers to modern Kings the title peculiar to the *Jewiſh*, of the LORD'S ANOINTED: equally violates the rights of Men. For to reſiſt the *Lord's anointed*, who was God's Deputy or Lieutenant in his kingdom, was rebellion againſt God. Hence court flatterers, when they had given the title to modern Kings, did not reſt till they had inveſted them with the prerogatives of it, likewiſe. And from thence inferred their divine Right, and the peoples unlimited Obedience. Whereas, had this title, which belonged to the Jewiſh Kings in a literal and real ſenſe, been applied, as it ought, to our Monarchs, in a figurative and accommodated meaning, it had been of excellent uſe to inſtruct the People in the ſacred character of every legitimate Magiſtrate; the reſiſting of whoſe ordinances is, indeed, the reſiſting the ordinance of God.

But another place may be more proper to go thro' the many various errors and ſuperſtitions, which have ariſen, in theſe latter ages, from a miſapplication to the Men and Societies of the world at large, of the Principles and Providences on which the *Jewiſh* ſtate

was formed and conducted. It ſhall ſuffice, at preſent, that I have juſt pointed out their nature and conſequences; and ſhewn how they ariſe from an apoſtolical declaration ill underſtood; *that whatſoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning*, which, when rightly interpreted, yield that *patience and comfort*, St. *Paul* ſpeaks of, as the genuine fruits of Chriſtian *hope*. Let us diſtinguiſh, therefore, and always have in mind, that the DOCTRINAL points of the Old Teſtament were written for our *belief*; the MORAL parts for the regulation of our *conduct*; and the DEVOTIONAL for the exerciſe of our *piety*. This will lead us to St. *Paul's* true meaning, where he ſays, *All ſcripture is written by inſpiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for inſtruction in righteouſneſs*[d]. But then, as to the greater part of the Volume of the Old Teſtament, that which is HISTORICAL, and gives account of the Laws and fortunes of the Jewiſh Republic, it was written for our *information*, concerning the general oeconomy of God's diſpenſation to mankind; of which the divine eſtabliſhment and adminiſtration

SERM. II.

[d] 2 Tim. iii. 16.

of

SERM. II. of that Commonwealth makes a conſiderable part. A RELIGIOUS POLICY *added*, as the Apoſtle ſays, or thruſt in, between the PATRIARCHAL and CHRISTIAN Diſpenſations, *becauſe of tranſgreſſions*; and to preſerve the memory of the true God, in an idolatrous world, *till the ſeed ſhould come, to whom the promiſe was made*[e]. For this end, God ſaw fit to erect that State into a THEOCRACY, properly ſo called; in which he himſelf was the ſupreme civil Magiſtrate.

The conſequences of which form of Government were theſe: 1. That it was adminiſtred by the exertion of an *extraordinary* providence. 2. That Religion and civil Society were thoroughly *incorporated*. 3. That Religion had a *publick*, as well as a *private* part; the ſubject of it being as well the State collectively, as individuals ſeparately. And 4. That the ſanctions both of religion and ſociety were *temporal* rewards and puniſhments. Of all this, that is to ſay, of the expediency and even neceſſity of ſuch a form of Policy, for the carrying on the great ends of God's moral government of the world, and the natural

[e] Gal. iii. 19.

conſe-

consequences arising from it, I have elsewhere discoursed at large[f]. SERM. II.

Now from the *first* circumstance, the exertion of an *extraordinary* providence, it follows, that we are not to regulate our ideas of God's dealing with us, as a State or nation, by his administration of the *Jewish Theocracy*; Mankind being now under a *common*, not an *extraordinary* providence: I mean, it follows, we are not to expect it in the DEGREE; though, indeed, from this circumstance, nothing hinders but we might expect it in the *kind*.

But then from the other *three* it follows, that we are not to expect it, even so much as in the KIND. For Religion, among the *Jews*, was incorporated with their Society, and had a PUBLIC part: Hence *Impiety*, when it abounded, became a public crime; and, as such, was, from time to time, severely punished on the State. But, the *Christian* Religion hath no public part; hath not the State, as such, but individuals only, for its subject. Hence *Impiety* is not now a *public*, but a *private* crime: For which, the offender will

[f] *Div. Leg.* B. v. Sect. ii. 3, 4.

doubtless

SERM. II. doubtleſs be ſeverely puniſhed, but his puniſhment ſhall be according to the rules of the Goſpel diſpenſation.

Again, the *Jewiſh* ſanctions were TEMPORAL only; which made it fit, and ſometimes *neceſſary*, that the crimes, even of private men, ſhould have their puniſhment inflicted on the State, as by that means condign miſery was derived on particulars. But the ſanctions of our religion are *future rewards and puniſhments*; for the latter of which, impious and wicked men are properly reſerved; and therefore, there is not the ſame expediency in puniſhing them *through* the State.

This then, to which numberleſs other conſiderations might be added, is ſufficient to ſhew, that we have no real authority from *Scripture*, when interpreted on the principles of human reaſon, to conclude, that God's dealing with the *Jewiſh* people is the meaſure of adminiſtering his providence over other States: Or that, becauſe the PRIVATE vices and impieties of men under that Oeconomy have, by the juſt judgment of God, often brought diſtreſs upon the COMMUNITY, that they have now the

ſame tendency to provoke his wrath and indignation againſt ours. SERM. II.

This I preſume to be a fair repreſentation of this important ſubject: And I hope, it will not be judged unſeaſonable in a time of general danger; when, though the ill ſtate of our moral condition ſhould not be kept hid from us, yet methinks it ought not to be aggravated by diſcouraging examples drawn from thoſe dreadful judgments inflicted on the *Jewiſh* nation: A parallel much inſiſted on; but not with that exactneſs which the dignity of the ſacred Writings demands, or the criſis of our preſent Diſorders ſeems to require; when every good man will deſerve the public thanks, *Quod de republica non deſperaſſet.*

But it will be aſked, "Are not vice and impiety the certain deſtruction of Communities? And are not Communities the ſubject of God's mercies and judgments?" My anſwer is in the affirmative: And it will ſerve to ſupport what hath been already ſaid, concerning that crude, inconcluſive Divinity, which makes God's dealing with the *Jews* the model of his Providence in the world at large. It will,

SERM. II. at the ſame time, explain and clear up what may be further obnoxious to objection or miſinterpretation.

To the firſt of theſe queſtions, therefore, I ſay, that where, in defining the nature of the *Jewiſh* Commonwealth, I ſpoke of God's national judgments on his *choſen People*, for their impieties, I uſed the exact and philoſophic language of a Divine; and meant thoſe *conſequences* of wrong which follow from the *will of God*; not the *effects* which ariſe from the *nature of things*. Rewards and puniſhments of the firſt kind are thoſe only which revealed Religion acknowledgeth for the ſanction of its precepts: though platonic preachers, in their moral harangues, may have been accuſtomed, by a *latitude* of expreſſion, to call the miſchiefs ariſing naturally, out of moral evil, by the name of *God's judgments*. Which, perhaps, would ſcarce deſerve notice, were they not accuſtomed likewiſe to confound Theſe with the judgments of God, *properly ſo called*; to the great injury, as I think, of revealed Religion, for reaſons too long and too intricate to be here aſſigned. Now, as to the natural

natural iſſue of vice and impiety, nothing can be more certain than that they are the inevitable ruin of a Commonwealth. For IMPIETY, which conſiſts in a contempt of the ſanctions of Religion, removeth the firſt and ſtrongeſt pillar of Society, the fear of divine puniſhment, for falſhood and wrong. From hence ariſeth a diſregard to the *outward tye of oaths*, the great ſecurity of the MAGISTRATE; and a diſregard to the *inward tye of conſcience*, the great ſecurity of the PEOPLE. As *impiety* undermines ſociety, ſo VICE more openly attacks it. But both with the ſame fatal ſucceſs. The epidemic evils of every powerful Community in its decline, are LUXURY and AVARICE: Which, by an unnatural mixture, are inceſſantly begetting one another even in the ſame breaſt. By theſe means, the NATIONAL WEALTH, one of our main ſtrengths againſt foreign invaſions, becomes in part *exhauſted*; and, which is almoſt as bad, in part, *unequally diſtributed*: And the PERSONAL VIGOUR of the people, which makes the other, is either enervated by opulence miſemployed, or debaſed by ſordid and inactive poverty. But to reckon up the

SERM. II.

SERM. II.

train of evils, which iſſue from theſe two maſter-vices, would be an endleſs taſk. Let it ſuffice to ſay, that theſe are the evils which fill private Families with unnatural quarrels; infeſt the Courts of juſtice with chicane; and diſtract the councils of Government with faction. FACTION, which accumulates all the evils of diſſention in one; and fraught with the diſpoſitions of the worſt citizens, impudently pretends to all the qualities of the beſt. FACTION, which ſcruples no ſhape however venerable, no name however ſacred, to draw the deluded People to ſecond her private and corrupt purpoſes, maſked over with pious zeal for Religion, and diſintereſted love of our Country.

But then if the evils of *impiety* and *vice* be, ſeparately, ſo deſtructive to a Public; How malignant muſt they prove, when they act in concert? as they always do, when they exiſt together. For prophaneneſs gives an edge and keenneſs to immorality; and immorality claps on a leaden biaſs to the mind, which accelerates it's growing averſion to Religion.

However

However ſecure, therefore, the PUBLIC SERM. may be from apprehending the *judgments* II. *of God* for the iniquity of particulars, yet we ſee it has every thing to fear, from *the nature of things*. A caſe, which when arrived to a certain point, admits even of leſs hope than the other. For God, whoſe mercies are over all his works, frequently withholds the evils of his poſitive judgments from ſinful man; but never reverſes the order of Nature to embolden him in his wickedneſs. Yet we have this conſolation at leaſt, that, though ſuch deſtruction be ſure, it is ſtill in our power to avert it. It is only reſolving on a ſpeedy courſe of ſobriety, juſtice, and piety: By which, as kingdoms become great, ſo by that only, can they remain ſecure. For, as in the natural body, an athletic habit, acquired by abſtinence and exerciſe, can never be preſerved by intemperance and ſloth; ſo a body politic become powerful by the modeſt parſimony, by the virtue and religion of its citizens, can never ſupport it's power by their luxury, injuſtice, and impiety.

SERM. II.

We come now to the ſecond queſtion, "Whether STATES, as well as PRIVATE MEN, may not be the ſubject of divine diſpleaſure, ſo as to bring down its ſevereſt judgments upon them?" To which we reply, that Nothing is more certain. A Society is an *artificial man*, having like the *natural*, all thoſe eſſential qualities, which conſtitute a MORAL AGENT; The diſcernment of good and evil; A will to chuſe, and a power to put it's choice in execution. Hence the rules of civil juſtice, in the intercourſe between nation and nation, are the very ſame, as thoſe, in a ſtate of nature, between man and man. And accordingly we find, (for here Scripture comes in again *for our learning*) that God dealt with the *Jewiſh* nation under this idea. And though his *particular contract* with it will not ſuffer us to collect, a mode of providence over others, ſimilar to what was adminiſtered amongſt them; yet his entering at all into *contract*, ſhews that ſtates are conſidered, and will be dealt with by him as MORAL AGENTS.

We muſt needs therefore conclude, both from *Revelation* and *Reaſon*, that the hand of

of Heaven diſtributes good and evil to So- SERM.
cieties, according to their merit or unde- II.
ſert: Not upon that fancy, that as States
are only *artificial beings* with a preſent ex-
iſtence, and incapable of a future, there-
fore God is obliged in juſtice to pu-
niſh and reward them HERE. This is a
mere ſchool invention, and confuted by
the general hiſtory of the moral world:
Where, we find indeed many ſignal exam-
ples of the divine vengeance inflicted upon
States and Communities; yet, generally,
at ſuch a diſtance from the crime, that the
puniſhment is not *identical*, as according to
this learned fancy it ought to be: for the
ſameneſs is not real or natural, but nominal
and artificial only. Again, according to
this doctrine, the adminiſtration ſhould be
conſtant and exact, failing in no inſtance,
nor defective in any degree. Whereas we
have many examples in States as well as pri-
vate men, where iniquity hath abſolutely
eſcaped the rod of divine vengeance. From
all this we conclude, that, not for the fan-
taſtic reaſon here confuted, but for one far
more weighty and ſubſtantial, SOCIETIES
are puniſhed or rewarded according to their

SERM. II. behaviour; a reaſon worthy the dominion of the great Lord of the univerſe, That is to ſay, For example, and to keep alive the ſenſe of God's providence, in a careleſs and impious world.

It remains, therefore, only to conſider what thoſe actions of Society are, which we ſuppoſe to be the objects of divine favour or diſpleaſure: Now theſe (in a Society, like our own, eſtabliſhed on a ſyſtem of Laws which ſecure reverence to the Deity, and impoſe due reſtraint on vice and immorality) can be evidently nothing elſe than the obſervance or neglect of GOOD FAITH, juſtice, and equity in the tranſactions of one of theſe communities towards all others. By this teſt, therefore, we might well conſent that *Great Britain* ſhould be tried to the utmoſt; tried even by her enemies. When it would be clearly ſeen whether, in her collective capacity, ſhe deſerves, or has juſt reaſon to fear that impending vengeance, from the hand of Heaven, with which, in a time ſo critical, good men may be but too apt to terrify themſelves, and others.

In

In all our national tranſactions ſince the REVOLUTION to theſe times, *Great Britain* has been ſo unfaſhionably tenacious of the public faith, and ſo generouſly intent on the good of *Europe*, that we have never paſſed for Politicians amongſt thoſe who are moſt famed for their ſcience in the myſteries of State. And as to the war which we are at preſent engaged in; though the corrupt intereſts of Private men, of Trading-bodies, and of State-parties amongſt us may have all concurred to puſh us forward; yet a common obſervation is ſufficient to ſatisfy you, that it was firſt begun againſt SPAIN, for ſatisfaction of real injuries, which they had owned, acknowledged; and in public convention contracted to repair. But, encouraged by our unhappy diviſions, the agreement was unjuſtly violated, as ſoon, almoſt, as it was made. In this quarrel we were *principals*. An *auxiliary* war, in which the PUBLIC FAITH called upon us to engage, followed, in ſupport of the houſe of AUSTRIA, taken at advantage, and againſt all the ſpirit of treaties cruelly attacked and plundered. Both theſe together ſoon produced a *defenſive* war againſt SERM. II.

SERM. II.

FRANCE; whoſe reſtleſs ambition, (eſſential to her Conſtitution) ſeizes every favourable conjuncture of advancing that idol of her politics, the giving law to *Europe*, now ſupported *Spain*, to perſiſt in denying to do us juſtice, and encouraged the other enemies of the houſe of *Auſtria* to join her in their ungenerous depredations. And all this with an apparent deſign to break that eſtabliſhed and equitable ballance of Power, ſo neceſſary for the peace and felicity of *Europe*: Which, when ſhe found us reſolved to maintain, ſhe publicly denounced war againſt us in all its forms.

This is a true ſtate of the public quarrel; of our ſhare in it; and of our conduct with regard to all our neighbours. Now what is there in all this, that ſhall make us afraid to appeal for aid and protection to the tribunal of eternal juſtice?

If reparation, by the ſword, for national injuries, after all the ways of peace had been tried in vain; If the diſcharge of public faith, when ſolemnly demanded, in behalf of a confederate Power, moſt cruelly oppreſſed; If ſelf-defence againſt

thoſe

thoſe who openly ſet themſelves to de- SERM.
feat the honeſt purpoſes which Juſtice II.
called upon us to diſcharge; If laſtly, the
ſupport of the eſtabliſhed ballance of power, that is, of the liberties of *Europe*, againſt the moſt deteſtable perfidy, the moſt unjuſt uſurpations, and the moſt lawleſs and deſtructive ambition; If, I ſay, all, or any of theſe, may intitle us to the protection of Heaven, we ſeem to have the beſt grounded expectations for its declaring in our favour.

This public act of humiliation before God is therefore enjoined with a modeſty and holy confidence, not always obſerved by AUTHORITY on theſe occaſions: Where, with an impiety that makes ſober men aſtoniſhed, the tremendous majeſty of Heaven is too often mocked and inſulted, by invoking its bleſſings on the arms of fraud, rapine, and injuſtice. But, bleſſed be God! GREAT BRITAIN hath now a CAUSE, for which it may not only with decency ſupplicate the protection, but with confidence appeal to the juſtice of Heaven: a *cauſe* founded on the ſolid baſis of SELF-DEFENCE, PUBLIC FAITH, and the LIBERTIES OF MANKIND;

SERM. II. KIND; all nobly vindicated in a juſt and neceſſary war.

There is only one impediment to the happy iſſue of our appeal; and that is the PRIVATE vices and impieties of the People: And to remove this, was the purpoſe of this ſolemn Act of devotion; in which we are called upon by our gracious *Sovereign* (ever intent upon our welfare) to humble ourſelves before the avenging hand of God, and to deprecate his Judgments, by a free confeſſion of our ſins, and a determined purpoſe of amendment.

I have ſhewn you how certain and inevitable a deſtruction VICE and IMPIETY always bring upon a People. If this be not ſufficient to induce you to a ſpeedy reformation, think upon the conſequence of perſiſting in them at this juncture; when, by ſuſpending the protection of Providence, which, as a Community, I have ſhewn, we have juſt reaſon to expect, we haſten, by a ſtroke from Heaven, that ruin, which is more ſlowly advancing from the nature of things. So that, in our inſtant reſolves, not only our *future* welfare, a matter of infinite importance,

which

which we have in common with all men, SERM. but our *preſent*, is eminently concerned. II. The enjoyment of all that is dear and valuable to men, depending on the preſervation of our happy Conſtitution, more ſhaken by our inteſtine vices, than by the arms of its degenerate and rebellious Citizens, now audaciouſly advanced into the very heart of the Kingdom.

Let us then, in good earneſt, reſolve upon a thorough Reformation; A return to that gracious ſimplicity of manners; that amiable modeſty in dreſs and diet; that temperance in pleaſures; that juſtice in buſineſs; which made BRITAIN ſo diſtinguiſhed in the manly annals of our forefathers. Let us ſpeedily return to that ſober piety, that ſerious ſenſe of Religion, by which our Anceſtors were encouraged to form, and enabled to ſupport, the PRINCIPLES on which this happy Conſtitution is erected. But above all, as the firſt ſtep into the old paths of honour, let us emancipate ourſelves from that deteſtable ſpirit of libertiniſm, impudently aſſuming the name of FREETHINKING; the bane of common life, the opprobrium of common ſenſe,

SERM. II. sense, and the dishonour even of our common humanity. Let us but be instant in doing this, and we shall soon have earth and heaven once more in conjunction, to make us happy and victorious over all the confederated enemies of our peace.

A DE-

A

DEFENCE

Of the preceding

DISCOURSE.

A Free and equal Government is the greateſt temporal bleſſing the Almighty ever beſtowed upon mankind. Such an one, in his great mercy, he beſtowed on us; of which we were in full poſſeſſion, when a vile unnatural rebellion, ſupported by the moſt formidable Power in *Europe*, threatned to overturn it; and on its ruins, to erect a civil and eccleſiaſtic tyranny; the moſt deteſted evil wherewith God, in his wrath, ever permitted the enemy of mankind to deform the fair work of creation.

At this important juncture, when no human means, ſufficient to ſave us, were at hand, but our determined courage to live and die with the Conſtitution, I obſerved ſome good men were apt to terrify themſelves and others with an apprehenſion, that the *private* vices of the people had brought down this judgment of God, upon the PUBLIC, which it was to be feared muſt end in it's deſtruction. Into this kind of Divinity I ſuppoſed them to be led by the conſideration of God's dealing with the JEWISH PEOPLE; on whom, in the magnificence of his royal bounty, he had graciouſly beſtowed the moſt excellent of all civil governments; ſubjected, however, to deſtruction in puniſhment for their *irreligious practices.*

At this juncture, a faſt-day, being appointed by authority, to implore God's bleſſings, and to deprecate his judgments, I underſtood it to be my duty, on ſuch an occaſion, both as a miniſter of God's word, and a ſubject of the King, to examine into the reaſonableneſs of theſe apprehenſions; and to ſhew, to thoſe committed to my care, what they had indeed to truſt to.

In

In the firſt place, therefore, I endeavoured to prove, that the caſe of the jewiſh People could not, for many reaſons, be brought into example: That the method of providence, there adminiſtered, did indeed admirably fit the *Moſaic* conſtitution; but the chriſtian oeconomy had revealed unto us a different way of puniſhing the ſins of particulars: And that, on the principles of natural light, we might gather, that the puniſhment of a right conſtituted Public, was due only to civil crimes; from which, we being remarkably free, I concluded, that our happy conſtitution had great reaſon to expect the diſtinguiſhed protection of heaven: For that it would be hard to find, throughout the hiſtory of mankind, any one State, either antient or modern, Monarchy or Republic, ſo long, and ſo eminently, diſtinguiſhed for its OBSERVANCE OF PUBLIC FAITH: There being but one inſtance ſince the Revolution (at which time, our Conſtitution, properly, aroſe) where *good faith* was not moſt ſcrupulouſly and religiouſly diſcharged by it.

Such was the doctrine I delivered in the preceeding diſcourſe. And was it na-

tural to think, that at ſuch a time, and on ſuch an occaſion, it ſhould give offence to a Divine of the Church of *England?* It did. And I was then told from the preſs, that "The clergy very "well know and needed not my help "to inform them, that God was under a "ſpecial covenant with the *Jews* for "temporal good and evil. But as this co-"venant, whatever privileges it gave to "the *Jews* above other nations, could not "deſtroy God's right as univerſal governor; "an argument therefore would very proper-"ly lye from God's dealing with the *Jews*, "to what other nations are to expect in "like caſes, in ſuch points as either reaſon "or Scripture ſhew, to appertain to God's "univerſal government; of which ſort is "the puniſhing nations and kingdoms for "the wickedneſs of them that dwell there-"in. As appears from the FLOOD, from "the caſe of SODOM and GOMORRAH, of "the NINEVITES, and of thoſe HEATHEN "NATIONS whom the *Jews* were raiſed "up to deſtroy (as the Scripture expreſly "ſays) *for their wickedneſs*[a].

[a] *Hiſt. of* Abraham, *&c.* p. 100.

The

The pernicious doctrine to be confuted, we see, was this, " That God, in his com-" mon government of the world, doth not " deprive nations of that greatest blessing he " ever bestowed upon them, a *free and equal* " *Government*, for the vices of *particulars*." This position, I supported on our *natural* notions of God's providence; and on what we find *revealed* of his moral government in Scripture. In the first, the Objector was silent: In the second, (where I considered the *Jewish* government, as the only case, that could seem to support the contrary opinion) he supplies my omissions: and urges me with God's judgments on the *people at the flood, on Sodom and Gomorrah*, the *Ninevites*, and the *seven nations*.

But amongst all these, I could not find one *free and equal government*; for which, only, I undertake to be an advocate; and therefore they were omitted. Some of them were uncivilized tribes, living in a state of nature, in which there was *no* blessing of Government to take away: And others, in a still viler condition, the slaves of petty tyrannies, where the destruction of the State was the removal of God's severest

curſe. In a word, I was ſpeaking of the greateſt human happineſs hoſtilely attacked, and in danger of being loſt. And the Objector confutes my doctrine, by inſtances of the greateſt human miſery occaſionally removed; The deſtruction of the noble Conſtitutions of *Sodom and Gomorrah:* to which, not over decently, he thought fit to compare the free Government of *Great Britain.* I was ſpeaking, and ſpeaking only, of a CONSTITUTION, of a COUNTRY, where civil and religious liberty flouriſhed at their height. I never concerned myſelf, how God would deal with a rabble of ſavages: nor thought it worth while to conſider, what kind of a puniſhment it was, to thoſe who groaned under it, to overthrow a tyranny. I regarded thoſe illuſtrious Societies as hardly coming into account, when God, in his juſtice, weighs the fate of nations.

" [b] But Mr. *W.* (ſays the objector) who " loves to be by himſelf, after having re- " tailed to us the principles of the *Divine* " *Legation,* comes to this concluſion, dia- " metrically oppoſite to the ſenſe of his

[b] *Hiſt. of* Abraham, *&c.* p. 101.

" brethren, and I believe of all chriſtian " divines from St. *Paul* to this day, *viz.* " that *we have no warrant to conclude, that* " *becauſe the private vices and impieties of* " *men under the* JEWISH OECONOMY, *by the* " *juſt judgment of God, frequently brought* " *amazing deſtruction on their nation, that it* " *has now the ſelf ſame tendency to provoke his* " *wrath againſt* OURS." This I ſhould have thought might have ſet the Objector right; and have ſhewn him, that I confined my doctrine to the bleſſing of a *free* and *equal* government, when I conſidered none other than the JEWISH and OUR OWN. But he ſeems to mean well, and to be much embarraſſed: Let us try to help him out.

The temporal puniſhments, which God inflicts upon iniquity, have three objects. *Particulars*; a *People*; and a *State* or *Government*. The puniſhment of the two firſt Objects, I hold to be inflicted for the CRIMES OF MEN; the latter only for the CRIMES OF THE STATE. The ſubject of my ſermon was concerning the puniſhment of *legitimate* States, *as ſuch*. The particular caſe confined me to this conſideration; the imminent danger of our happy Eſtabliſhment

from a powerful body of rebels, which, at the moment of my writing, had penetrated, without controul, to the very centre of the kingdom. With God's puniſhment for the ſins of particulars, by, what may be called, the *national judgments* of famine, peſtilence, or any other way that hurts not the *Conſtitution*, my ſubject was not concerned. In this, as much a lover of ſingularity as he is pleaſed to repreſent me, I believe with my *brethren*. I believe theſe judgments to be ſent for the ſins of private men; but ſo reſtrained, as not to hurt that great gift of God, a free and equal Government: For here I ſtop; and ſtill affirm, that if a State be a MORAL AGENT, it's actions, *as ſuch*, are thoſe only which make it *accountable:* God, according to my theology, never depriving us of a bleſſing, he hath been pleaſed to beſtow, till that bleſſing hath been abuſed. The very caſe of the Moſaic Oeconomy, which ſo much miſleads the Objector, might, if he had attended to plain facts, have ſet him right. He might have ſeen, that, in this Diſpenſation, if a Particular tranſgreſſed in his Ceremonial obſervances, divine puniſh-

ment purſued Particulars. When the body of the People diſuſed or had corrupted the holy Ritual, the body of the People ſuffered. But it was IDOLATRY only which brought deſtruction on the Republic. For *Idolatry* was the introducing another *Law*; which was *high treaſon*: it was the tranſferring their *obedience* from their Supreme Magiſtrate; which was *rebellion*: Crimes deſervedly puniſhed by ſubjection to a foreign yoke. And this puniſhment was inflicted on the State at different periods, both under the adminiſtra ion of their Judges and their Kings. It's laſt final Overthrow was attended with a general diſperſion which ſubſiſts to this very day. And the crime, as the puniſhment, was the ſame. For the rejection of the Meſſiah was a ſpecies of this *Treaſon* and *Rebellion*. *Idolatry* ſet aſide the *Law*; and *Rejection of the Son of God* was ſetting aſide their *ſupreme Magiſtrate*, on whom, the Father had devolved his Kingly rule and Government. In a word, Tho' the Jewiſh State was frequently overturned for what are no *crimes of State* with *us*, yet it never ſuffered for what were no *crimes of*

State with them. And this may ſerve to obviate the charge of Contradiction, which the Objector brings againſt me, for ſuppoſing the *People* are puniſhed for *private Sins*; and yet denying that the *State* incurrs the danger of God's judgments for any thing but *public crimes.*

Had the Objector conſidered all this, and it lay as open to his conſideration as it did to mine, his Monſters, both before, and after the flood, might have been well ſpared: His *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, his *Nineviteſ*, and the *Seven nations.* Juſt as pertinent, on this occaſion, as the giants *Gog-magog* and *Coryneus.* Having ſaid thus much for the *truth* of my doctrine; One word, if it may be done without offence, concerning its *expediency.* This will be beſt ſeen by conſidering what muſt be the natural conduct of a good man, on the principles of the Objector, in a State (which he compares to *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*) when ſo imminently threatned as ours was, at the time of my preaching this ſermon. Muſt not ſuch a one, all theſe circumſtances concurring, think us a devoted people? And would he not, in mere piety, deem it a

ſtruggling

ſtruggling againſt God when he fought for the Conſtitution. What encouragement would be now left him for the diſcharge of his duty as a Citizen? He is ſuppoſed to meaſure every thing by the jewiſh ſtandard. He knows what character hiſtory has tranſmitted to us of thoſe Zealots for their country, who ſo long oppoſed the progreſs of *Titus's* arms, in the laſt deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*. Theſe, he finds, repreſented as an abandoned crew of miſcreants, impiouſly oppoſing the fixt deſtination of Providence: And is it charitable to believe that this *good Chriſtian* of the Objector's making would dare to follow their example? Beſides, on ſuch grounds as theſe, what falſe theology could not perfect, real poltronry would ſupply; which, by the aid of a religious principle, would teach men to diſguiſe their Cowardice under the ſpecious ſhew of a pious reſignation.

A SER-

A

SERMON

PREACHED ON THE

THANKSGIVING DAY

For the SUPPRESSION of

The late Unnatural Rebellion,

in M DCC XLVI.

SERMON III.

2 Cor. iii. 17.

WHERE THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS, THERE IS LIBERTY.

THIS is the character St. *Paul* gives of the GOSPEL in the purity of its profeſſion; that it begets LIBERTY; the bleſſing, thro' which the perfection of our nature is obtained. For, by *Liberty* is to be underſtood that right and due exertion of our faculties which terminates in TRUTH and VIRTUE: The *Slavery* of rational creatures conſiſting in a ſubjection to *Vice* and *Error*. SERM. III.

The various kinds of *Liberty*, thus procured, may be the ſubject of ſome leſs confined Inquiry. On this occaſion, I ſhall conſider only one, but that of the nobler ſort,

SERM. III. ſort, CIVIL LIBERTY; And ſhew, from REASON and FACT, that, *where the ſpirit of the Lord is, there is* this *Liberty.*

I.

1. TRUE RELIGION, delivered in the Goſpel, and called in my text the SPIRIT OF THE LORD, *recommends* and encourages a LIBERTY OF ENQUIRY; and ſupports and *indulges* the free exerciſe of Conſcience. But men practiſed in the exertion, and habituated to the enjoyment, of theſe RELIGIOUS RIGHTS, can never long continue ignorant, or bear with patience the invaſion, of their CIVIL. The human faculties can never long remain in ſo violent and unnatural a ſtate, as to have their operations perpetually defeating one another, by the contrary actions of two ſuch oppoſite Principles, as thoſe of *freedom* and *reſtraint*. The one or other muſt, in a little time, overcome. Either the inveterate *ſpirit of tyranny* will viciate the purity of Religion, and introduce that blind ſubmiſſion of the underſtanding, and ſlaviſh compliance of the Will into the CHURCH, which it exacts in the State; Or elſe the *ſpirit of the Lord* will break down the

the barrier of an unequal, deſpotic power, and bring into the STATE as well as Church, *a free and reaſonable ſervice.* SERM. III.

2 TRUE RELIGION teaches, that its *End* is the HAPPINESS OF MAN; in oppoſition to all the ſuperſtitious fancies of the *falſe*; which place it in the arbitrary, the ſelfiſh, or the capricious manifeſtation of God's power, or intereſt, or glory. And this naturally leading us to the *end* of civil Government, will direct us how to form a *right* Conſtitution, when we have, by the foregoing Principle of free inquiry, already detected the injuſtice of the *wrong*; which profeſſes to make the People, for the ſake of the Prince.

3. That equitable Policy, by which TRUE RELIGION governs in the Church (and *true*, as well as *falſe* Religion muſt always have a Church to govern) will further aid us, when we have now found the *end* of civil community, to attain the *means* likewiſe, by copying, in civil matters, from that eccleſiaſtical ſubordination of authority and limitation of power, where the Sovereignty reſides in the whole body of the Faithful; Not, as in the adminiſtration of corrupt Religion, where a deſpotic Clergy conſtitutes the CHURCH.

4. But

SERM. III.

4. But above all, That grandeur and elevation of mind, that ſublimity of ſentiment, that conſcious dignity of human nature, which TRUE RELIGION raiſes; which Holy Scripture dictates; and which the *Spirit of the Lord* inſpires, will be ever puſhing us forward to the attainment of thoſe CIVIL RIGHTS, which we have been taught to know by reaſon, are Ours; and which, we have been made to feel by experience, of all Ours, are the moſt neceſſary to human happineſs.

By theſe ſeveral ways, is the *Spirit of the Lord*, or TRUE RELIGION, naturally productive of the great Bleſſing, CIVIL LIBERTY. But turn now to the reverſe of the medal; and there we ſhall find the antipart of this divine truth; and read in as clear characters, that, *where the Spirit of* POPERY *is, there is* SLAVERY.

Inſtead of freedom of inquiry and uncontrouled liberty of Conſcience; inſtead of making the end of Religion human happineſs; inſtead of an equitable adminiſtration of Church policy; inſtead of that elevation of mind and conſcious dignity of Human nature; we are here preſented with a blind

ſubmiſſion

ſubmiſſion of the underſtanding; with a forced compliance of the will; and with abſurd and ſuperſtitious doctrines concerning God's deſpotic and capricious government; imitated, in its own HIERARCHY; and adminiſtred by an ambitious and corrupt Clergy, who labour to eſtabliſh narrowneſs of thought, lowneſs of ſentiment, and baſe and abject conceptions of MAN, created *after* GOD's *own Image*. SERM. III.

II. I proceed now to my ſecond point; namely, to confirm the foregoing obſervations, by FACT: From which likewiſe it will be ſeen, how naturally *true* Religion is productive of civil Liberty.

1. When the fierce and free nations of the North diſmembred and tore in pieces the ROMAN EMPIRE, they eſtabliſhed themſelves in their new conqueſts, on one common principle of policy; in which, the LIBERTY OF THE PEOPLE made, as it ought to do, the Baſe, and operating Power. And erected on ſo juſt a plan, theſe GOTHIC Governments might have ſtood till now, had not the rank influence of PAPAL SUPERSTITION ſo viciated thoſe generous Policies, that, when the great inſtruments of Reformation firſt appeared, they

SERM. III.

ſaw the Weſtern world as deeply loſt in *civil*, as, in that from which they were appointed to free it, *eccleſiaſtic* ſlavery. For the triumphant *Hierarchy* had amply revenged the fallen Empire on the necks of its deſtroyers. But it was now wonderful to obſerve, how equal a pace, the civil and the religious Reformations kept with one another. Wherever the influence of the GOSPEL reached, it never fail'd to redreſs the exorbitances of Government: While thoſe places which continued ſunk in SUPERSTITION, ſtill groaned under the weight of civil oppreſſion: In a word, the æra of political and religious freedom was the ſame: So general is the truth of my text, that, *where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.*

2. To this perhaps it may be objected, That as the Reformation of religion on the Continent was generally the work of the populace, and ſometimes carried on in a very tumultuary way, it is more reaſonable to aſcribe the conſequent regulations in the State to this lucky *circumſtance* of popular fervour, than to any *natural influence* of the Goſpel. But this objection will be ſeen to have little weight as we come nearer home:

Here we ſhall find, that Reformation pro- SERM.
duced the ſame happy fruits, in *England*, III.
where it was begun and perfected by the
Prince; who can hardly be ſuppoſed to have
formed deſigns of liberty, in favour of the
People, againſt himſelf. What regulations,
therefore, in the balance of power, ſuc-
ceeded the reformation of the Church, we
muſt needs aſcribe to the ſole influence of
true Religion. Now, when the firſt foun-
dations of it were laid amongſt ourſelves,
we knew little more of civil liberty than the
name. For tho', in *Magna Charta*, we had
a kind of *Original Compact*, as the laſt ap-
peal of the People; Tho' the hiſtorical and
legal records of our Conſtitution declared us
to be a free Nation; And tho' we had, from
time to time, aſſerted our right to freedom,
as in *claims at law*, to prevent forfeiture
from preſcription; yet was the balance of
power ſo ill adjuſted, by that undue *in-
clination* which SUPERSTITION had made
in property; and by the more hurtful
ſeparation it had eſtabliſhed between the
temporal and ſpiritual Intereſts, that public
liberty lay at the mercy of a Court cabal,
compoſed of Churchmen and Miniſters of

SERM. III. ſtate; where it had rarely room to breathe, but when the two intereſts quarreled among themſelves; which they never did, but when the crown refuſed to ſhare the tyranny with the mitre.

Add to this, that he who fixed this foundation was a luxurious ſanguinary tyrant[a]; who, tricked and deluded by the Court of *Rome* in a ſcandalous purſuit of a papal *diſpenſation*, threw off in a rage the biſhop of *Rome's* uſurped ſupremacy: And, by that act, notwithſtanding the acceſſion of a NEW SUPREMACY to himſelf, laid the firſt ſtep to the deſtruction of his own exorbitant power in the State. In which we can never ſufficiently admire and adore the rectifying hand

[a] — "Fot *Henry* the eighth; if all the pictures "and patterns of a mercileſs prince were loſt in the "world, they might all again be painted to the life, "out of the ſtory of this king. How many ſervants "did he advance in haſte, but for what virtue no man "could ſuſpect; and, with the change of his fancy, "ruined again, no man knowing for what offence? "How many wives did he cut and caſt off, as his "fancy and affection changed? How many princes of "the blood, with a world of others of all degrees, "did he execute? Yea in his very death-bed," *&c. Raleigh's Pref. to his Hiſt. of the world.*

of

of heaven; who made arbitrary power his inſtrument to lay the foundations of Liberty; and employed the impious pretenſions of the *Romiſh* ſee to introduce Reformation. SERM. III.

2. From this time of *Goſpel light*, a CONSTITUTION became ſeen and underſtood: And the Church made no advance to its original purity, but the State was the better for it, in ſome additional ſecurity to public liberty. In a word, their intereſts were now found to be ſo inſeparable, and the aid they lent each other ſo reciprocal, that, whenever the COMMON ENEMY formed ſchemes to the prejudice of the *one*, He always began with ſome attempts againſt the *other*. Thus, when the two firſt Princes of the houſe of STUART aimed at a deſpotic power in the State, they firſt endeavoured to viciate the ſimplicity and freedom of reformed Religion, by the pomp of *Worſhip*, and the ſervility of *papal Diſcipline*. And again, when the two laſt of that unhappy Houſe laboured to reſtore the *Romiſh* ſuperſtition, they tried to pave the way by a *power of diſpenſing with the laws*.

In the firſt of theſe important ſtruggles, the defence of our happy conſtitution was intruſted to the LAITY: In the latter it was

SERM. III. aſſumed by the CLERGY. And were we to judge only by events, theſe would be enough to expoſe the injuſtice of that clamour ſo frequently raiſed againſt our Order by the common enemies of our holy Faith, "that "in all matters wherein public liberty is "concerned, the Clergy, either thro' ma-"lice or ignorance, ſo embroil and defeat "the counſels of honeſt men, as ſhews they "are inveterate enemies, or at leaſt very un-"fit agents, of the *common rights of ſubjects.*

But I will not take this advantage. Nor does their cauſe or character require it. The truth (and truth can never hurt them) was this, The LAITY were new in the trade of oppoſition. They felt their grievances too ſenſibly: They reſented them too warmly. They had ſuffered under many repeated acts of injuſtice; and the frequent promiſes of redreſs, which they had procured by a conſtant attention to their truſt, they had ſeen as often violated. Succeſsful oppoſition made the Spirit of liberty run high: and diſtruſt and jealouſy hindered them from finding any other ſafety than in arms; tho' ſatisfaction had been already procured by the ordinary, legal way, of the Conſtitution. What followed

followed was all madneſs and deſpair: till anarchy and confuſion ſhut up the dreadful ſcene of JURIDICAL murders and SPIRITUAL impieties. But, ſee now, the efficacy of Liberty and true Religion, when they have mingled their powers together! The ruined Conſtitution roſe again more ſuddenly than it fell: But, riſing out of a chaos, by the ſole force of its natural virtue, unaſſiſted by the experienced hand of Policy to form and proportion its parts, it revived with the ſame imperfections that had occaſioned all the preceeding calamities. A melancholy preſage, that the friends of liberty were not yet gotten to the end of their labours. Such was the miſcarriage of the LAITY. SERM. III.

But now the CLERGY, when it came to their turn, on a later occaſion, to ſtand in the gap againſt oppreſſion, had learned the great art of putting their Enemy[a] in the wrong, by forbearing to excite the people to the laſt remedy of the Conſtitution, till He had plainly ſhewn that he was inexorable, by arming himſelf with a *divine right* to govern againſt Law. And even then, grown wiſer by former errors, both of their

[a] James II.

SERM. III.

own and of the *Laity*, they conducted themſelves ſo ſagely, and directed others ſo temperately, that they not only recovered the Eſtabliſhment from the brink of ruin, but enabled the Legiſlature to repair and perfect thoſe defects and weakneſſes which had ſo often brought it into that condition: This gave a new birth to the Conſtitution, and fixed it on that ſolid baſis of liberty on which we now enjoy it; and which nothing, but our own follies, can unſettle. For tho' it may be ſtirred or ſhaken by the application of any trifling power, yet, like that ancient image of its ſtate, the *rocking-ſtones* of our anceſtors the DRUIDS, no united force can remove it from its centre. For that exactneſs of balance which ſubjects it to the firſt appearance of danger, ſecures it from all real and ſubſtantial injuries.

Amongſt the benefits this new Eſtabliſhment produced, the CHURCH received, as it well deſerved, it's ſhare; which was the removing from it that ſcandal to true religion, *reſtraint on the conſciences of men*. But the Church of *Chriſt* never receives a courteſy from the State, that it does not, ſooner or later, repay with intereſt. Of which it hath given

given us an inſtance in the unnatural rebel- SERM.
lion juſt now ſuppreſſed: when every thing III.
that is dear to us came ſuddenly, no body
knows how, into hazard; and was, by the
valour and conduct of a brave young Prince,
under the manifeſt guidance of Providence,
as ſuddenly retrieved. At this important
juncture, no order of men better approved
themſelves to the State than the body of
the Clergy; tho' all exerted an unuſual vi-
gour for its preſervation. And to this wiſe
and happy attachment, of a WHOLE PEOPLE
TO A CONSTITUTION, was owing, next to
the diſtinguiſhed protection of Heaven, the
preſervation of *Britiſh* liberty, and in that,
of the liberties of MANKIND.

Thus have I endeavour'd to ſhew, from REASON and FACT, how naturally true Religion produceth civil freedom: and, when produced, how ſtrongly it ſupports it. Which is a ſufficient anſwer to the dull invectives of ignorant or malicious Libertines, againſt *Chriſtianity* and its *Miniſters*; as if both were obnoxious and unfriendly to the cauſe of liberty; as if the end of Religion was to chain down ſlavery on us by conſcience; and the buſineſs of the

Clergy

SERM. III. Clergy only to faſten the rivets. On the contrary, we have ſeen, under the firſt head, how auſpicious the true Faith is to free Government; and under the ſecond, how faithfully devoted the Miniſters of that Faith are to its intereſts.

It will be ſaid, perhaps, that their merit to the State was very equivocal, at the *Revolution*; the time when they moſt pride themſelves in their ſervice to it: For that their great object was the CHURCH: with little regard to the civil Eſtabliſhment; whoſe reformation they retarded, if not endangered, by that abſurd ſyſtem of SUCCESSION, which they had been long inſtilling; and whoſe infection then worked ſtrongly to the diſturbance of that auguſt aſſembly then ſolemnly *convened* for ſettling the nation.

To which I anſwer, it is no wonder, the Clergy ſhould be moſt ſolicitous about what was their proper care; what they beſt underſtood; and what was then deemed to be in moſt danger: That if they knew little of the nature and rights of Society, they might be well excuſed, as they had been miſled by a ſet of COURT DIVINES, who had betrayed and ſacrificed the Principles of the

the REFORMERS, to the practices of *James* and *Charles* the firſt's Miniſters; and as they had never been taught by *experience*, the bleſſings of a free Government, regulated upon true principles. Nor is this candid repreſentation at the expence of juſtice: For when now become happy by a Conſtitution, which they themſelves had ſo largely contributed to procure, they manifeſted, by their early and unanimous aſſiſtance, in the late danger to the State, that they know as well how to prize the benefits of free Government, as the bleſſings of pure Religion.

SERM. III.

On the whole, therefore, whether we conſider the genius of Religion, or the conduct of its Miniſters, we muſt needs conclude, That *where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.*

II.

But REVELATION rarely gives us one Truth to contemplate, without enabling REASON to purſue the argument, to the diſcovery of another. So it is in the caſe before us. The very PROOF of this apoſtolic propoſition, that *where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty*, ſhews the fact

to

SERM. III. to be inverted; and, that WHERE LIBERTY IS, THERE IS THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD, *i. e.* that civil liberty is favourable to, and naturally productive of, true Religion. For if, as hath been ſaid, true religion be auſpicious to civil liberty by the ſimilar PRINCIPLE on which both are eſtabliſhed; by the ſame MAXIMS on which both are adminiſtred; by the like END to which both are directed; and by the ſame ENLARGEMENT *of the human faculties*, which both naturally produce; it will then follow, that *civil liberty is equally auſpicious to true religion*: So that whichever be the firſt eſtabliſhed, it will, when all foreign impediments are away, make room for, and introduce the other [b].

[b] En regardant la Religion ſimplement du côté de la politique, il paroit que la PROTESTANTE eſt la plus convenable aux *républiques* et aux *monarchies*; elle s'accorde le mieux avec cet eſprit de LIBERTE qui fait l'eſſence des premieres: car dans un êtat ou il faut des négocians, des laboureurs, des artiſans, des ſoldats, des ſujets en un mot, il eſt ſur que des citoiens, qui font voeu de laiſſer péril l'eſpéce humaine, deviennent pernicieux. Dans les monarchies, la *religion proteſtante*, qui ne releve de perſonne, eſt entierement ſoumiſe au

This

This inverted truth is, on this ſide as well as on the other, confirmed likewiſe by *Fact*. The Chriſtian Religion, on it's firſt appearance, making it's earlieſt and readieſt way, through the free cities of *Greece* and *Leſſer Aſia*. SERM. III.

But to bring the matter home to the preſent occaſion; let us juſt take a view of the advantages which civil freedom affords for the exertion of the *Spirit of the Lord*, both in *faith and practice*, by means of the two great principles of LIBERTY and JUSTICE; on which, a free State is founded and adminiſtred.

1. The firſt advantage ariſeth from the allowance of free enquiry, which the

gouvernement; au lieu que la *catholique* établit un état ſpirituel, tout-puiſſant, fécond en complots et en artifices dans l'état temporel du prince; que les prêtres qui dirigent les conſciences, et qui n'ont de ſupérieur que le pape, ſont plus maîtres des peuples que la ſouverain qui les gouverne, et que par une adreſſe à confondre les intérêts de Dieu avec l'ambition des hommes, le pape

SERM. III. maintenance of the rights of conſcience diſpoſeth men to make in religious mat-

s'eſt vu ſouvent en oppoſition avec des ſouverains ſur des ſujets qui n'étoient aucunement du reſſort de l'egliſe. *Memoirs de la Maiſon de Brandebourg*, p. 276, *Ed.* 8vo.

It is pleaſant enough likewiſe to ſee another writer, the celebrated M. Voltaire, a very good Catholic, whom a *philoſophic Spirit*, an' pleaſe you, *l'eſprit vraiment philoſophique*, has taught to deſpiſe REVELATION; to ſee him, I ſay, bring this very truth to diſcredit both the *Goſpel* and the *Reformation*. The *latter*, in his opinion, only reviving that REPUBLICAN SPIRIT in the weſt of Europe, which the other firſt kindled in Greece and Aſia. "Ne "pourroit-on pas trouver peut-être l'origine de cette "nouvelle peſte qui a ravagé la terre, [la fureur des "guerres de Religion] dans L'ESPRIT REPUBLI-"CAIN qui anima les premieres Egliſes? Les aſſem-"blées ſecrettes, qui braivoient d'abord dans des caves "& dans des grottes l'autorité des Empereurs Romains, "formerent peu-a-peu un etat dans l'etat. C'etoit un "REPUBLIQUE cachée au milieu de l'Empire.— Les "anciennes opinions RENOUVELLES depuis par LU-"THER, par ZWINGLE, par CALVIN tendoient pour "la plupart à detruire l'autorité *Epiſcopale*, et même "la puiſſance *Monarchique*. C'eſt une des princi-

ters.

ters. By this employment, we come of courſe to the Author of Truth and to the

SERM. III.

" pales cauſes ſécrettes, qui firent recevoir ces dogmes " dans le nord de l'Allemagne où l'on craignoit d' " être *aſſervi* par les Empereurs. Ces opinions tri- " ompherent en Suede & en Danemarck, pays où les " peuples étoient *libres* ſous des Rois. Les AN- " GLOIS, DANS QUI LA NATURE A MIS L'ESPRIT " D'INDEPENDANCE, les adopterent — Elles pene- " trérent en Pologne, et y firent beaucoup de pro- " gres dans *les ſeules villes où le peuple n'eſt point eſ-* " *clave.* La Swiſſe n'eut pas de peine à les recevoir, " parce qu'elle etoit *Republique.* Elles furent ſur le " point d'être établies à Veniſe par la même raiſon — " Les Hollandois ne prirent cette Religion, que " quand il's *ſecouerent le joug* de l'Eſpagne. Genève " *devint un Etat populair, en devenant Calviniſte* *." Here he owns that as, in the former inſtances, Civil Liberty procured Reformation, ſo in this of Geneva, Reformation procured Civil Liberty. His aſſignation of the *cauſe* and *effect* is not exact. Reformation was the *cauſe* in Holland and ſome other places as well as in Geneva. However, you have here an Enemy of Revelation bearing teſtimony to theſe great truths, that WHERE THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS THERE IS LIBERTY; and that where liberty is, there *the Spirit of the Lord* will not be long abſent.

* Le Siecle de Louis XIV. Tom. II. p. 185. Lond. 1753. 8vo.

SERM. III.

profeſſion of his Religion in it's PURITY: This was the caſe of thoſe, who took the liberty before it was allowed them: Nor was their labour vain. They dug thro' the rubbiſh of papal ſuperſtition, till they came to the pure fountain of Goſpel-truth. FREE ENQUIRY can never fairly, and of itſelf, terminate in UNBELIEF. Infidelity is the natural product of reſtraint and ſpiritual tyranny, when borne by us with ſuſpicion and reluctance. For then we are apt to reflect, and to reaſon on the truth and fitneſs of the things impoſed. And the leaſt attention is ſufficient to convince us of the abſurdity of what we find thus violently eſtabliſhed. But reſtraint, not affording us the *means*, nor ſlavery the *courage* to penetrate thro' inveterate errors into truth, we run with blind reſentment into a brutal infidelity; hurried forward by that common infirmity of the unſtaied mind, which perpetually inclines it to fall from one extreme to another. Hence it is we ſee *France* and *Italy* over-run with the worſt kind of *Deiſm*. There our travelling Gentry

firſt picked it up for a rarity. And, in- SERM.
deed, at firſt, without much malice. It III.
was brought home in a cargo of new fa-
ſhions: and worn, for ſome time, with that levity by the importers, and treated with that contempt by the reſt, as ſuited, and was due, to the apiſhneſs of foreign manners: Till a ſet of ſolemn block-heads, grown inſolent by liberty, and malicious by unſucceſsful attempts towards diſtinction, abuſed the indulgence of a free Government, in reducing thoſe vague impieties into a ſyſtem. And ſo it was, that licentious ignorance came to be diſtinguiſhed with the name of FREE-THINKING. Thus *liberty abuſed*, we ſee, comes to the ſame iſſue with *liberty oppreſſed*. They both terminate in IGNORANCE, with this only difference, that the one is the ignorance of the *Few*, and the other the ignorance of the *Many*. But that theſe are not the genuine fruits of liberty appears from the example of the beſt and wiſeſt Men, whom it hath ever conducted to the knowledge and belief of Revelation.

2. Nor is civil liberty leſs friendly to the MORALITY, than to the DOCTRINE, of the Goſpel.

SERM. III. Goſpel. The Government of a free State is adminiſtered by a ſyſtem of equal laws; founded in the general maxims of Juſtice; and objective to the Common good. For all States are adminiſtred by the ſame principles on which they are erected. Now a habitude to ſuch laws muſt needs enable men to judge more truly, and to think more favourably of the *morality* of the Goſpel: ſolely calculated to promote the peace, and to multiply the bleſſings of mankind. For as to that inconſiſtence, between the maxims of POLICY and RELIGION, ſo affectedly inſinuated by thoſe who would palliate their vicious practice, or recommend their impious opinions, it is no where to be found, but in the adminiſtration of deſpotic Governments, or of thoſe mongrel free ones, which, forſaking the genius of their inſtitution, act like ſuch as are moſt arbitrary. And, indeed, how could the maxims of *Policy* and *Religion* be inconſiſtent? Unleſs there were DIFFERENT ROADS to *happineſs here*, as the ſupporters of this paradox pretend there are, to *happineſs hereafter*. But ſince the temporal good of Man, whether riſing, as in *Religion*,

from the acts of particulars to the whole; SERM.
or deſcending, as in *ſociety*, from the acts III.
of the whole to particulars, ſince this, I ſay, can only be procured by the application of the ſame invariable principles of NATURAL JUSTICE, we muſt needs conclude, That true Policy and Religion are not only perfectly conſiſtent, but, (as was the purpoſe of the foregoing account to ſhew) mutually beneficent.

Theſe reciprocal advantages, ariſing from the very Being and Nature of either inſtitution, are one part of that mutual aid and ſupport, ſo much ſpoken of, which Religion and civil Government lend to one another.

A *ſecond* ſprings from the natural influence of their reſpective powers: And there is yet *a third*, which is derived from the artificial application, and interchange of thoſe powers. But of the two latter parts, I have elſewhere diſcourſed at large [d]; and mention them in this place for no other purpoſe, than to give light to an acknowledged Fact, employed to inforce the application, proper for this glad

[d] See the *Alliance between Church and State.*

SERM. III. ſolemnity, in which we celebrate the divine mercies for our late providential deliverance.

III.

Now the ſenſe of theſe mercies ſhould always riſe in proportion to the conſciouſneſs of our own demerit. And this will naturally draw us to that only acceptable return of ſervice, *The reformation of our lives and manners.*

The unhappy condition of human things makes the greateſt goods of providence moſt liable to abuſe. The moral State of the People is now felt by all, and apprehended by many. For, bleſſed be God, our condition is not yet ſo deſperate as to render us inſenſible.

It is a FREE Government only that attains the *end* of Government; which is, ſo to improve the mind and accommodate the body, as to make a rational Life ſafe and elegant. It's *equity* allows free inquiry, which leads to truth; and its *policy* encourages commerce, which produces plenty. But men grown wanton by proſperity abuſe the liberty of thinking, and the fruits of induſtry,

induſtry; ſo as to indulge every wanton fancy of the mind, and every vicious appetite of the body. From hence ariſe INFIDELITY and LUXURY, the two capital evils of our infatuated countrymen. SERM. III.

The heighth, to which they are both arrived, cannot be aggravated; and need not be particularly deſcribed. The caſe is notorious, and confeſſed. So that nothing remains, on this occaſion, but to exhort you, from motives of the utmoſt conſequence, now at length after Religion hath done ſo much for you, in producing liberty, to let liberty do its part, and produce *the Spirit of the Lord*; that is, a reverential *regard* for that which gave birth to liberty, Revealed Religion, and a *moderate* uſe (ſuch as even natural Religion preſcribes) of theſe good things, which Commerce, the offſpring of liberty, hath procured for us.

1. We may conſider, therefore, in the firſt place, how unſuitable it is to the nature of civil Freedom to fall back into the ſlavery of vice and error, to which tyranny had kept men enthralled. The excellency of civil Freedom conſiſts in its power of emancipating the mind as well as body; and

SERM. III.

making the whole man dependent on himſelf. For what matters it to be exempted from the chains of a precarious tyrant, if we ſtill continue ſlaves to the caprice of our own corrupt nature? We are freed by Providence from the unjuſt dominion of a Maſter, that we may *enjoy* the bleſſings of Nature in that juſt meaſure in which they are beſtowed upon us. But can this be done amidſt the exceſſes of *Luxury* and *Irreligion?* The *enjoyment* of good implies *pleaſure* in its uſe. But all pleaſure ariſes from theſe two ſources, the *paſſive ſenſation* and the *reflex act*. In the firſt, *moderation* conſtitutes the pleaſure. For thoſe agreable ſenſations, which the appetite to good provokes, and the poſſeſſion of it gratifies, are all loſt and diſſipated by *exceſs*; which produces, inſtead of pleaſure, diſguſt and loathing; every racking diſtemper of the body, and every inflamed paſſion of the mind. From the ſecond ſource, the *reflex act*, ariſes our grateful meditation on the Giver. And what generous mind is there whoſe pleaſure, in the moderate uſe of worldly things, is not doubled by the conſideration of their flowing from the kindneſs

neſs of a friend, whoſe affection for us is al- SERM.
ways operating for our good? How high III.
then muſt be the raptures of the religious
man, who conſiders all he enjoys as the gift
of him who gave him life, and preſerves
him in being. But all this pleaſure, *Irre-*
ligion deſtroys; and leaves nothing in its
ſtead, but an unſatisfactory indulgence of
the groſſer appetites; much below the bru-
tal, as it is haunted with the diſmal appre-
henſions, of a miſerable reverſe: a reverſe
not in his power either to prevent or retard,
as it is, upon his own wretched principles,
the caprice of Chance, or the fixed order of
Deſtiny; which is for ever clouding or
ſhifting the ſcene. Thus unſuitable to the
ends of *Freedom* are vice and error.

They are no leſs inconſiſtent with the
character of a *Free-man*. It is the Free-
man's glory to have vindicated the dignity
of human nature in ſhaking off oppreſſion,
and becoming his own maſter. This is in-
deed his glory. But if he ſtop here, his
ſweat and blood are ſpent in vain. Had he
a body only to take care of, he had done
his work, when he ſecured it from outward
violence. But Humanity is not an empty

SERM. III.

carcaſe. Its nobler part is an informing mind; the guide, the director, and final object of its operations. If he ſuffer this to be brought into ſubjection, all his boaſts of outward Freedom are childiſh and impotent.

Yet ſhall this wretched victim of Luxury and Irreligion look high: and pretend to pity the SAVAGE, who hath never got, and deſpiſe the SLAVE, who was unable to preſerve, the mighty bleſſings of Social life, and Liberty. But let Them ſpeak for themſelves: Let us hear them in their turn, and obſerve how eaſily they confound his miſerable Vanity and Arrogance, "—And why, "ſays the *Savage*, will you affect to pity "me? Do not I uſe the gifts of Nature juſt "as you employ the benefits of Society? "Whatever chance hath thrown in my "way, or my honeſt toil hath procured, I "waſt indeed, and devour with an intem-"perate and beaſtly appetite. But are you "more humane or circumſpect, after hav-"ing amaſſed the ſpoils of your Country, or "ſucceeded to the patrimony of your An-"ceſtors? You may diſguiſe, indeed, our "common brutality under the civilized lan-"guage of *ſacrificing to your genius*: But

"your

" your riot is the more inſufferable, as your SERM.
" pretended *arts of life* have taught you to III.
" preſerve, to improve, and to multiply the
" bleſſings of providence, ſo as to make the
" enjoyment laſting and diffuſive. Whereas
" We waſte them juſt as we receive them
" from Nature's hand, rude and periſha-
" ble: being as unable to preſerve or im-
" prove them, as *to uſe them with modera-*
" *tion*; Moderation, that *art of life*, which,
" ſenſible experience tells us, muſt needs be
" the leader and conducter of all the reſt.
" For, whatever difference there may be,
" in other reſpects, between Society and
" Savage life, they agree in this, that want,
" diſtreſs, and miſery, are the certain iſſue
" of luxury and riot. But here, the un-
" taught *Indian* might ſet you a leſſon.
" The [c] patience, the fortitude, and reſig-
" nation, with which we bear the wants,

[c] This character of the ſavage is common to all the natives of ſouth and north *America*, as our voyagers and miſſionaries agree. — Gloutons juſqu' à la voracité, quand ils ont de quoi ſe ſatisfaire; ſobres, quand la néceſſité les y oblige, juſqu' à ſe paſſer de tout, ſans paroître rien deſirer. *Relation d'un voyage dans l'Amerique Merid. par M. de la Condamine*, p. 52.

SERM. III.

" we bring upon ourſelves, aſtoniſh the ci-
" vilized beholder. But, if he tell us true,
" of what paſſes in Cities, the iſſue of your
" luxury wears a very different face. The
" firſt approaches of diſtreſs make you reſt-
" leſs and impatient. You quarrel with the
" Government you are ſo vain of; you de-
" ſpiſe the Rulers you have choſen; you
" trample on the Laws you had ſo hotly
" demanded; and, unleſs the relief be ſpee-
" dy, your giddy madneſs drives you on,
" till you precipitate yourſelves into that
" condition, you ſo much affect to pity, a
" *State of Nature*: Indeed, ſo circum-
" ſtanced, of all conditions the moſt pitiable.
" For this which, with us, is a *State of*
" *Peace*, is, with you, as both the politician
" holds, and the people feel, a *ſtate of war*
" *and madneſs*, where every man's hand is
" ſet againſt his God and his brother."
Thus might the Savage anſwer.

Nor has the Slave of arbitrary power leſs advantages in this contention, while he thus addreſſes this vain idolater of liberty; " You
" triumph in your generous exploits; when,
" in vindication of your own freedom, you
" retrieved, what you call, the ſcandal of
" human

" human nature, the lying patiently at the SERM.
" foot of a tyrant. But ceaſe theſe empty III.
" braggs, and attend to your gains. What
" have you got, good man! by ſhaking off
" oppreſſion? Have you ſhaken off, with
" it, thoſe Impieties that make oppreſſion
" heavy, and Slavery indeed a ſcandal? If
" the plague-ſore of irreligion, that ende-
" mic evil of deſpotic governments, ſtill
" continues to corrupt your notions, how
" miſerable is your boaſted freedom! You
" are only accumulating guilt, while you
" thought to reap the fruit of your labour.
" Glory or profit you can pretend to none.
" That fortitude of reaſon, which led you to
" Liberty, hath *betrayed* you in the purſuit
" of Truth: and thoſe unſightly errors you
" have embraced in its ſtead, ſuffer you not
" to *enjoy* the bleſſing you had ſo greatly
" purchaſed. You borrow our vices, while
" you deſpiſe the ſlavery that produced
" them; not conſidering that our abject
" ſtate affords ſome excuſe for theſe diſor-
" ders, which your happier ſituation renders
" unpardonable. You have light to lead you
" to the ſource of truth; you have liberty
" to profeſs it. Error is of a piece with the

" reſt

SERM. III. "reſt of our fortunes. And if, like beaſts "of burthen, we are to move as our conduc- "tors drive us, it is ſomething more tolera- "ble to drudge on blindfold, than to have "the uneaſy proſpect of a better way, which "we are not permitted to purſue." Thus far with juſtice, might thoſe, we moſt pity and deſpiſe, recriminate upon us.

In a word, without freedom from *vice* and *error*, the reſt is but the ſhadow of liberty. At beſt, but as the ornaments of dreſs to a diſtempered body, abſurd and cumberſome; tho', to one in ſtrength and vigour, they become the preſervation of health, and the improvement of natural beauty.

2. But if, what we owe Ourſelves and the dignity of our common nature will not move us; we ſhould, at leaſt, conſider what we owe to *Providence*. Our caſe, how light ſoever we may make of it, is a little uncommon. We find ourſelves in poſſeſſion of the greateſt human good, CIVIL AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTY, at a time when almoſt all the reſt of mankind lie in ſlavery and error. This is no ordinary mercy. Nor is this conceit the effect of that vulgar prejudice to *country* or *opinions*, which always inclines

men to over-rate their own advantages. It is a Fact, we feel: a Fact, we ſee: a truth which all the concluſions of reaſon ſupport; and the united voice of experience confirms. So that if there be any thing certain, this is not to be diſputed, That we *Engliſhmen* (how unworthy ſoever) are at preſent moſt indebted to providence of the whole race of mankind. SERM. III.

Nor is this all. The beſtowing theſe bleſſings on us was but the *earneſt* of God's favour to us. His election of us for the inſtruments of his glory is more clearly ſeen in his preſervation of us, at every important criſis, when human power and policy, as in our late deliverance, ſeemed combined to our deſtruction. Of which, whoever doubts, muſt be either very ignorant of our hiſtory, or very ready to call in queſtion God's moral government. Not that we are to fancy ourſelves, on theſe accounts, the peculiar favourites of Heaven. But rather that we hear it ſpeaking to us, as it did ſometime to the *Jews*, *I do not this for your ſakes, O houſe of Iſrael, but for my holy name's ſake.* 'Tis poſſible we may be ſelected by Providence, in theſe latter ages, to preſerve the memory

SERM. III. memory of civil liberty amidſt a ſlaviſh world, as the *houſe of Iſrael* was formerly, to keep alive true religion amidſt an univerſal apoſtaſy. And, if this be the caſe, we betray our truſt as well as forfeit our obligations, when we neglect to make a ſuitable return.

But, on whatever footing we receive our bleſſings, our debt of gratitude is the ſame: which, at this time eſpecially, calls upon us to conſider ſeriouſly how we ſhall beſt addreſs our ſelves, to diſcharge it. Right reaſon tells us, that the moſt acceptable way of returning God's mercies, is to apply them to the attainment of that *further good*, which they are capable of producing: Eſpecially when, in the nature of things, the mercies given are only the MEANS; and that *further good* is the END. We have ſhewn, that CIVIL LIBERTY does, above all other bleſſings, afford us the largeſt helps to the improving ourſelves in the *principles* and *practice* of TRUE RELIGION. How deſperate then is our ingratitude if we neglect to make the beſt uſe of ſo happy a ſituation! a ſituation, which enables us to advance as far beyond our neighbours in piety and virtue, as

we

we are placed above them in liberty and power: And, if inſtead of applying theſe advantages to the purpoſes for which they were intended by Nature, and directed by Providence, it ſhould be found we have only abuſed them to the inflaming our impiety and luxury, what name can be given to ſo horrid a profanation! an abuſe of God's mercies ſo ſtrangely unnatural, that tho' experience makes it familiar to us, yet retired Reaſon ſtands aghaſt at ſo inexpiable a prodigy. SERM. III.

3. But however indulgent we may be to thoſe idle notions in *theology*, which promiſe us impunity for our trangreſſions of the *law of God*; we yet would bluſh to be thought ſo ignorant in *philoſophy*, as not to know, that there is no eſcaping the ruin which follows the violated *order of things*. NATURE, to which our libertines fly, from the GOD OF MERCY, is more ſtubborn and vindictive. We have ſhewn the mutual aid and ſupport which true religion and civil liberty impart to one another; and the neceſſary connection eſtabliſhed between them. We always find, that when civil liberty is gone, the *religion of the ſovereign* takes place; that is, any kind of

SERM. III.

of ſuperſtition fitted to the ſupport of arbitrary power; and ſlaves are ready to receive even the worſt. Again, the fall of true religion, whether betrayed by *Superſtition* or ſuffering open violence by *Infidelity*, draws after it the deſtruction of civil liberty.

How *Superſtition* helps it on, hath been ſhewn in the former part of this diſcourſe: and how *Infidelity* (that is a contempt both of the principles and practice of religion) precipitates its ruin, is ſeen by all who underſtand what effects *impiety* hath on the *ſecurity*; and *luxury*, on the *ſtability* of Government. Theſe are old beaten topics, which the common ſenſe of mankind hath made current in all ages.

IV

I ſhall attempt, therefore, to illuſtrate and inforce this truth (which one may juſtly reckon amongſt the firſt principles of true politics) by an obſervation not ſo commonly attended to, "That tho' *Impiety* and *Luxury* "be the certain bane of civil ſociety in gene-"ral, yet they are more ſpeedily deſtructive "of a FREE STATE."

The

SERM. III.

The two immediate ſupports of Government againſt inward and outward violence, are PUNISHMENT *of offenders*, and FUNDS *for the public expence*. Now, irreligion and luxury hinder a *free State*, more than any other, from making theſe neceſſary proviſions: as, in ſuch a State, the *conviction* of the guilty, and the *exaction* of ſubſidies are regulated and reſtrained by equal and eſtabliſhed laws.

The enlarged wants, and inflamed appetites of men in ſocial life, have ſo improved their cunning in the arts of ſecret injuſtice, as to evade all the force and reſentment of human ſtatutes. Here Religion comes in aid of the Law, to frighten men, by the terror of an inviſible Judge, from thoſe crimes which eſcape the notice of the Magiſtrate.

Now, take off this reſtraint, and ſee the different effects it will have upon a *free*, and a *deſpotic* Government. The Latter hath found, in the very genius of its conſtitution, a ſpeedy and vigorous remedy to this evil, by (what goes for nothing with an arbitrary Magiſtrate) the violation of natural juſtice, in the uſe of the rack, and conviction

SERM. III.

viction on doubtful evidence. Which, tho' perhaps begun in the wantonneſs of power, repeated to gratify ſome oblique intereſt, and continued out of habit, were at length found ſo neceſſary a balance to diſorder, where Religion had loſt its hold, that it became a maxim in theſe ſorts of Governments, "that it was better, ten innocent "men ſhould ſuffer, than that one offender "ſhould eſcape." And on this maxim, they have long regulated their adminiſtration of civil juſtice.

On the other hand, a *free State*, not only denounceth the crimes it puniſhes, by written Laws, but preſcribes and adjuſts the proof of them by explicit modes of invariable practice. While the proſecution of them is carried on by eſtabliſhed Forms, regulated on public equity, and the national juſtice of a whole community. This, with all its general uſes for the ſecurity of particulars, cannot but embolden the ſecret contrivers of evil: which our Law ſeems to have been aware of when it endeavoured to hide the inconvenience under a maxim founded in its natural lenity, "that it is better twice "ten guilty perſons ſhould eſcape, than one "innocent

"innocent man ſuffer[d]." A maxim, tho' becoming the genius and dignity of a free Society; yet at the ſame time it betrays the want of ſome reſtraining Principle, which may cooperate with human Laws. So that when Religion is gone, which only can afford a principle adequate to this ſervice, we ſee in what a deſperate condition the beſt Governments, becauſe they are the beſt, will be left. SERM. III.

Again, with regard to the ſupport of Government againſt foreign injuries. In a free State the public ſubſidies are the act of a delegated legiſlature; and ſo, of courſe, the voluntary contributions of the People: Which generally will be reſtrained in too light a proportion to their abilities, rather than extended to the neceſſities of the occaſion. Now when a free People are debauched by luxury, and impoveriſhed by the expence which muſt feed and ſupply their exceſſes; and conſequently, are become both unwilling and unable to anſwer the

[d] Mallem revera viginti facinoroſos mortem pietate evadere, quam juſtum unum injuſte condemnari. FORTESCUE *De laudibus Legum Angliæ*, C. xxvii.

SERM. III.

public demands, To what diſtreſs muſt the State, in ſuch exigencies, be reduced?

But it is not thus in a land of ſlaves: where the blood and ſweat of the people make part of their Maſter's exchequer: Where what is deemed the wealth of the Country to day, becomes the Court-treaſure to morrow: where money, by the magic of arbitrary power, is transformed into fairy favours; of one value when iſſued out; and of another, when called in again.

Now this being the conſequence of the ESTABLISHED ORDER OF THINGS, it is no wonder it ſhould be inevitable. For why did God eſtabliſh this order, but to fix ſuch bounds of right and wrong as ſhould ſerve for the direction of mankind? On the contrary, might events happen out of, or contrary to, this courſe, then would God's providence no longer govern, nor man's purpoſes have any aim; but the *moral* world would fall into a chaos as incapable of obſerving the law ordained for its direction, as the *natural* was in that ſtate from which the almighty fiat awaked it, and called it forth, for creation.

On

On the whole then, my brethren, if you have any regard to your character of free ſubjects to a lawful Prince, of grateful worſhipers of a beneficent God, or of rational dependents on a well-ordered Syſtem, you will, in good earneſt, ſet upon reforming thoſe horrid abuſes which make vicious Free-men a ſcandal to thoſe ſacred relations. Remember you are called upon by all that is excellent in Humanity, by all that is holy in Religion, and by all that is right and fit in the Order of things. And ſhould you ſtill continue deaf to the united voice of *Nature* and *Grace*, that which is out of Nature, and reprobate to Grace, the only things you have left, atheiſtic CHANCE or FATE, will prove utterly unable to ſnatch you from this impending ruin. SERM. III.

SERMON IV.

On the Nature of the MARRIAGE UNION.

MATTH. xix. 6.

WHAT GOD HATH JOINED TOGETHER, LET NO MAN PUT ASUNDER.

GOD, as *Creator* of the World, is Author of the *conſtitution of* NATURE; and as *moral Governor* of the World, he is Author of the *conſtitution of* GRACE. It is impiety, therefore, in man to attempt any alterations in either Syſtem: whether it be by *putting aſunder what God hath joined together*, the crime here forbidden; or by joining together what God hath put aſunder; which is generally the next ſtep in this progreſs of human folly. For when men have diſſolved the eſta-

SERM. IV.

SERM. IV. bliſhed combinations made by God, their preceding intereſts invite them, or their ſubſequent neceſſities draw them on, to make others of their own.

I ſhall firſt explain the Precept of my text in it's general import: and then conſider it as applied to the particular occaſion on which it was delivered.

Amongſt the more important combinations in the *conſtitution of Nature*, God hath *joined together*, as CAUSE AND EFFECT, Virtue and Happineſs, Vice and Miſery. Now ſhould the CIVIL MAGISTRATE ſo far forget his office of GOD's Delegate, as to annex rewards to Vice, and puniſhment to Virtue, he would incur the double guilt of *putting aſunder what God hath joined together*, and of joining together what he had put aſunder.

Again, God hath joined together, as RELATIVE AND CORRELATIVE, Children's obedience to their Parents, and Parents care and ſupport of their Children. Here too ſhould the CIVIL MAGISTRATE, like the Jewiſh Prieſts with their *Corban*, infringe upon the firſt, on pretence that the Public had

had need of all the Children's ſervice; and on the latter, on pretence that it hath need of the purſes of the Parent, he would be equally guilty of this impiety. SERM. IV.

All attempts to ſeparate what God hath joined together in the *conſtitution of Grace* hath the ſame wickedneſs and folly. God hath joined together, AS THE FOUNDATION AND SUPERSTRUCTURE of one Church in Chriſt, the Jewiſh and the Goſpel diſpenſations. But ſhould PARTICULARS, when embarraſſed and perplexed with difficulties ariſing from certain circumſtances in the Jewiſh Hiſtory and Religion, preſume to violate this connexion, by denying any neceſſary dependence of Chriſtianity upon it: what would this be but the prophane ſeparation here condemned.

Again, God hath joined together, AS THE GIFT AND THE CONDITION OF IT, Belief in Jeſus the Meſſiah, and everlaſting life. A connexion, which in the language of Divines, is called *juſtifying Faith.* But ſhould PARTICULARS, from their ignorance, their imperfect conception of the true nature of the Chriſtian diſpenſation, or from the injury which the abuſe of

SERM. IV.

this doctrine hath occaſioned to virtue and morality, venture to deny that it is *faith alone which juſtifies*, ſuch men would aſſuredly incur all the guilt of this impious ſeparation.

This is but a ſmall ſpecimen of the numerous caſes which might be given of the folly and perverſity of men in rebelling againſt God, and violating the conſtitution of NATURE, and the oeconomy of GRACE. But it is enough to ſhew what miſchiefs attend, and what impieties accompany, the ſeparating by human will, or by human Authority, what God by his will, or his nature, hath joined and united. For what can be conceived more deſtructive than to violate the ſettled order of things; or more impious than to counterwork the deſigns of him who eſtabliſhed that order?

But to come to the particular occaſion of the precept.

The Law of Moſes, for the wiſe ends of Providence, indulged the *Iſraelites* in the uſe of *Polygamy* and *Divorce*. Theſe, which were allowed them for the *hardneſs of their hearts*, had, by length of time, and

the corruption of their manners, ſtill further degenerated into a more licentious abuſe: ſo as to ſtand in need of the animadverſion of him who came to *fulfil the Law and the Prophets.* SERM. IV.

He more obliquely reforms *Polygamy*, by obſerving that, at the Creation, the human race began by a *male and female*; and that theſe were made *man and wife* [a]. He more directly condemns their practiſe of *Divorce*, by obſerving that God had pronounced, *They twain ſhould be one fleſh* [b]. From whence he infers, that *whoſoever ſhall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and ſhall marry another, commits adultery, and whoſo marrieth her which is put away, doth commit adultery* [c]: for that God having joined them together on thoſe terms, it was impiety in man to alter the conditions of the contract: *What God* (ſaith he) *hath joined together, let no man put aſunder.*

That it is highly criminal, therefore, for human Authority to put aſunder thoſe whom God in matrimony hath made one, is allowed and confeſſed on all hands.

[a] Ver. 5. [b] Ibid. [c] ver. 9.

The

SERM. IV. The only queſtion is, WHEN the two Parties may be ſaid to be THUS *joined together*, or *made one*.

To determine this, we ſhould conſider MARRIAGE under all it's forms. And, firſt, in it's moſt ſimple idea, diveſted of it's relation to *revealed* Religion and *civil* Society.

This union is, in itſelf, partly *natural*, and partly *ſocial*.

So far as regards the *condition*, that is, the prohibited degrees; and the *end*, the procreation of the ſpecies, it holds of *Nature*: In what concerns the mutual aid and ſupport of the parties, and their diſtinct claims to certain rights and privileges, it holds of *Society*. But *Nature* and *human Society* alone, ſeem not to have determined either againſt POLYGAMY or DIVORCE.

Revealed Religion and *Civil* Government ſoon followed. They were introduced to perfect human nature according to their ſeveral characters. What additions or regulations they brought with them is next to be conſidered.

RELIGION declares marriage to be the union of one to one: and the reaſon given is,

is, that God at firſt created only one of each ſex. It declares the union to be indiſſolvable; becauſe the female was made out of the ſubſtance of the male. And thus marriage, from a *natural*, became a *religious* union. SERM. IV.

CIVIL GOVERNMENT requires, that to make *private contracts* (in which Society is affected) valid and binding, they be entered into and executed by preſcribed and public forms. 1. Becauſe the miniſtry of public juſtice is to compel to the performance of them: ſo that it is but fit it ſhould preſcribe the conditions of the act it is to vindicate. 2. Becauſe ſome contracts, as this of marriage, have civil rights and privileges annexed unto them.

Thus we ſee, Marriage is of a MIXED nature; in part a ſacred ordinance, in part a human inſtitution. It hath both a *natural*, and a *ſocial* efficacy: Conſidered in a natural light, as an union of male and female, from whence all the charities of human life ariſe, it is a *religious* contract: Conſidered in a ſocial light, as creating new relations and connexions, all of which have their diſtinct rights and privileges

SERM. IV.

leges aſſigned to them in civil life, it partakes of a *civil* contract.

This diſtinction is marked out to us by the nature of things; and confirmed by Laws, divine and human.

What then, it may be aſked, are the diſtinct parts which GOD and the MAGISTRATE claim, as their peculiar, in this ſolemn contract? It is from God that two are made one by an indiſſolvable tie: and this is the LAW OF RELIGION. It is from the Magiſtrate that this Union, ordained by Heaven, is executed by a ſolemn form preſcribed by the State: and this is the LAW OF SOCIETY.

In confirmation of what is here ſaid, it is remarkable that in the Jewiſh Law, where all even the moſt minute matters that concern religious rites and ceremonies are circumſtantially preſcribed; nay, where the moſt exact directions concerning the legality and illegality of Marriages are delivered; it is remarkable, I ſay, that there is no *Form* of the marriage-ceremony: tho' the *Ritual Law* abounds with all other forms that relate to Offerings, Luſtrations, and Sacrifices. The ſame ſage oeconomy may be remarked in

in the Goſpel. Tho' Jeſus, as we ſee, reformed the abuſive practiſes crept into Marriage, yet he preſcribes no *Form* for the celebration of it: as he has done for *Baptiſm* and the *Lord's Supper*. What is this but a plain declaration by the Founders of both Religions, that the *Form* of celebration belongs to the civil Magiſtrate. SERM. IV.

From all this, it neceſſarily follows, That till this ſacred Union, inſtituted by God in Paradiſe, be ſealed and confirmed by ſuch rites and ceremonies, as the wiſdom and policies of civil States direct to be obſerved, God hath not *joined* any Pair *together*, according to his holy ordinance: and that the obſervance of ſuch rites and ceremonies is eſſential to that union which he declares to be indiſſolvable.

To ſuppoſe this Union may be *authentically* made in the preſent ſtate of Religion and Society, without the intervention of the civil Magiſtrate, leads either to *fanaticiſm* or *licentiouſneſs*.

The only two conceivable means beſides are, Either God's *revelation* of his purpoſe to the parties concerned, as in the caſe of the firſt pair: Or elſe his *declared* ſanctification

SERM. IV. tion of the natural desires, and private agreement of those who come together by sensual impulse, without the intervention of the Magistrate's allowance, and the sanction of his cooperating authority; so as to make their private act God's act, and thereby erect it into that religious Union, which he forbids human power to disturb or violate.

To expect God's extraordinary appointment would be opening the door to a new species of fanaticism which, inflamed by the most violent of our natural passions, would know no bounds.

To give the prerogatives of a sacred union to the private desires of the two sexes would disturb Society, by rendering Succession precarious, the Relations which arise from marriage uncertain, and the Rights and prerogatives annexed to them undeterminable.

In a word, the one would dishonour the sanctity of Religion; the other would disorder the harmony of Civil life. And therefore we may be sure God hath not done, nor will do, either one or the other.

We return then to our conclusion, That the marriage-bond which Jesus, in my text, forbids

forbids man's preſumption to diſſolve, is a contract ſo VIRTUALLY circumſtanced as the Laws of Religion ordain; and ſo FORMALLY executed as the Laws of each particular Society preſcribe. SERM. IV.

Where either of theſe requiſites are wanting, it is not that Union of which God is pleaſed to call himſelf the Author; and which he forbids man, on any other terms than that which the Religion of his Son preſcribes, to diſſolve.

From theſe clear *principles*, and this certain *deduction*, we collect the *juſtice* and Religion, as well as *expedience* and true Policy of a late ſalutary Law ſolely calculated for the ſupport and ornament of Society; by which the juſt rights and Authority of Parents are vindicated; the peace and harmony of families preſerved; the irregular appetites of Youth reſtrained; and the worſt and baſeſt kind of ſeduction encountered and defeated. I mean that ſage proviſion, whereby all pretended Marriages not ſolemnized as the WISDOM OF OUR ANCIENT CONSTITUTION directs, are rendered null and void.

SERM. IV.

For the diſſolution of a mock-marriage not entered into with the previous qualifications the Law of Nature enjoins, nor executed by the public forms which the Laws of Society require, is ſo far from *putting aſunder thoſe whom God hath joined together*, that it is only breaking an inſolent and diſorderly confederacy in licentiouſneſs, where God's Sanction and the Magiſtrate's Authority are equally inſulted: and by a crime too which indeed favours the moſt of that very impiety we are ſo commendably anxious to avoid: there being nothing which God hath more inſeparably united than the *obedience* of Children to the *care and protection* of Parents.

And if the indulgence of former times hath confirmed ſuch irregular and lawleſs combinations, which this Law condemns and diſſolves, it proceeded on wrong and miſtaken notions concerning the nature of Marriage. For Popiſh policy had turned this Union into a Sacrament; and Proteſtant ſimplicity had, by way of *interim*, given a kind of authority to thoſe Canons in which the ſyſtem of that policy was contained.

tained. But now, that the true principles of *natural Law* and *revealed Religion* have made this ſolemn and ſacred contract better underſtood, and that the abuſes of it were become intolerable, the wiſdom of the Legiſlature found it neceſſary to provide the efficacious remedy in queſtion: the only one which, on mature conſideration, was found to be effectual. And it is worthy our notice, that this, which was the more immediate object of their care, is contrived with ſo much provident ſagacity, that, had it been their directer purpoſe to ſeek a means for reſtoring the SANCTITY OF MARRIAGE to its ancient honours, we cannot conceive a more effectual method than what this very *remedy* has provided. The things which moſt contribute to excite reflexion, and to impreſs awe and reverence for any ſolemn Rite, being all here ſcrupulouſly required; ſuch as previous caution, public notoriety, open celebration, and a well-atteſted record. SERM. IV.

With matters of policy we have nothing to do, any otherwiſe than as the truths of Religion come in queſtion, by their being

SERM. IV. actively or passively concerned. And therefore I should here conclude what I had to say on this subject, but that a very material objection to my general argument is supposed to arise from the express words of Scripture. This is within our province; and, I presume, I may be permitted to examine it.

My argument proceeds on this principle, that MARRIAGE being in part a *religious*, and in part a *civil* contract, it must, in order to give it it's essential efficacy, be entered into on such terms as Religion enjoins, and compleated by such forms as the *Civil* Magistrate prescribes. From whence it is inferred, that the mutual agreement of the two Sexes alone is not sufficient to make a *legitimate Marriage*, either in the sight of GOD or of SOCIETY.

But, to this it is objected, That the *premisses* must needs be false, since St. PAUL hath expressly declared against the *conclusion*. "Know ye not (says he) that your bodies "are the members of *Christ?* Shall I then "take the members of Christ, and make "them the members of an harlot? God "forbid.

" forbid. What, know ye not, that HE SERM.
" WHICH IS JOINED TO AN HARLOT IS IV.
" ONE BODY? FOR TWO (ſaith he) SHALL
BE ONE FLESH. But he that is *joined to the Lord is one Spirit* [d]."

" Hence, ſay the objectors, it appears, that no more than the mutual agreement of the two Sexes to come together is neceſſary to give this contract it's moſt eſſential quality, namely, INDISSOLUBILITY, ſince the Apoſtle declares that the two ſexes meeting, or at leaſt living, in *Concubinage* (a ſtate Societies diſallow, and therefore a contract in which the Magiſtrate doth not interfere) become ONE BODY; the very circumſtance which makes an *inſeparable union.*

To underſtand the weight of this objection, we muſt conſider the Apoſtle's manner of treating his ſubject. — To ſhew the great enormity of *fornication* in a profeſſor of the Goſpel, he employs, for one of his topics, that eſſential property of Marriage, the making the two parties, one *fleſh* or *body.*

[d] 1 Cor. vi. 15, 16, 17.

SERM. IV.

By FORNICATION, we will ſuppoſe him to mean frequenting the *Stews*, or that more decent indulgence of the irregular paſſions called *Concubinage*. And then, according to the ſenſe of the objectors, he lays down this poſition, *That every whoremonger and harlot become one fleſh and one body, by virtue of the holy ordinance of Matrimony inſtituted in Paradiſe.* A poſition, which not only diſturbs and violates Society; but, by confounding Concubinage with Marriage, and making them one and the ſame, leaves the Apoſtle nothing to argue againſt, even in the height of his reſentment at a criminal aſſociation, which this very topic is employed to aggravate.

But this is not all. The Apoſtle, according to this interpretation, *makes one of two*, where Jeſus *makes two of one*. For the Saviour of the world allows *fornication* for a ſufficient cauſe of *divorce*. So that the crime is made to have two contrary effects at once.

Again, If fornication *makes one, of two*, then, by God's Laws it is both commanded and forbidden. For we are directed to

make that union, whereby *two become one*, in the injunction to *increaſe and multiply*; and yet we are warned, again and again, to *flee fornication*. SERM. IV.

Since therefore the ſenſe which ſupports the objection abounds in theſe abſurdities, we muſt ſeek a reaſonable meaning elſewhere. That is, in the Author's context, and in the courſe and tenour of his own reaſoning.

St. Paul, in order to expoſe the enormity of fornication amongſt Chriſtians, conſiders every man as the member of *Chriſt's* ſpiritual body; and every man, living in fornication, as the member of a harlot: a profanation which renders the criminal unworthy of the ſpiritual union with *Chriſt*. But then, to make the Corinthians ſtill more ſenſible of this profanation, he ſets before them the *cloſeneſs* of that ſpiritual union; which, in his accuſtomed manner, he inforces by analogy to the thing prophaning. Juſt as, in another place of this Epiſtle, he expoſes the profanation of the Lord's ſupper when joined to an Idol-feaſt, by a compariſon between what thoſe

SERM. IV. two Rites had, or were ſuppoſed to have, in common [e]. But the union of *Concubinage* not ſo well fitting his purpoſe as that of *Marriage*, he employs the latter to inforce the enormity of the former, and without ſtopping to change the terms, continues the uſe of the word *Harlot*, to predicate of her, what is ſtrictly true only of a *Wife*, namely, that *he which is joined to her is one body*.

This ſeems to be a fair account of the Apoſtle's illuſtration. And the manner of expreſſing it is altogether ſuited to that quickneſs of conception, and rapidity of argumentation, which diſtinguiſh this great Apoſtle's reaſoning. "He was a man (ſays Mr. Locke) "of quick parts and "warm temper; mighty well verſed in the "writings of the *Old Teſtament*, and full "of the doctrine of the *New*. All this "put together ſuggeſted matter to him in "abundance, on thoſe ſubjects that came "in his way. So that one may conſider "him, when he was writing, as beſet "with a croud of thoughts, all ſtriving

[e] See the Sermon on the *Lord's ſupper*, in this Vol.

"for

" for utterance. In this poſture of mind SERM.
" it was almoſt impoſſible for him to keep IV.
" a ſlow pace, and obſerve minutely that
" order and method of ranging all he ſaid,
" from which reſults an eaſy and obvious
" perſpicuity — One may ſee his thoughts
" were all of a piece in his Epiſtles: his
" notions were at all times uniform, and
" conſtantly the ſame: tho' his expreſſions
" very various. *In them he ſeems to take*
" *great liberty.* This is certain, that no one
" ſeems *leſs tied up* to a form of words [f]."

The character here given of St. Paul's *knowledge* ſhews him to be too well verſed both in the *Jewiſh* and *Chriſtian* diſpenſations to aſcribe the *eſſential attribute* of MARRIAGE, to FORNICATION or *concubinage:* and yet his *genius* made him very capable, amidſt a torrent of thought and croud of expreſſion, to uſe one term for another, which had in them thoſe ideas in common of which he wanted to make uſe.

But it may be thought perhaps a much eaſier, as well as juſter ſolution of the difficulty, to ſuppoſe that, by FORNICATION,

[f] *Preface to his commentary on St. Paul's Epiſtles.*

the

SERM. IV. the Apoſtle meant neither *frequenting the ſtews*, nor yet *concubinage*; but a *formal marriage*, tho' within the *Jewiſh* prohibited degrees.

It is certain that this was the general term which the followers of the Law employed to deſign ſuch marriages. And we ſeem to have a very eminent example of it in that famous apoſtolical decree which commands "to abſtain from pollu-"tions of Idols, and from FORNICATION, "and from things ſtrangled, and from "blood[5]." For this ſenſe of the term removes a difficulty which will for ever embarras the Decree, while *fornication* is underſtood to ſignify *vague luſt*; whereby things *poſitive* and *moral* are confounded, and put upon the ſame foot of obligation; either making abſtinence *from fornication* temporal; or abſtinence from *things ſtrangled and from blood*, perpetual.

But in the place in queſtion the ſenſe ſeems yet more evidently determined. The *fornication*, the ſubject of this *ſixth* Chapter, plainly refers to the *fornication* deſcribed

[5] Acts xv. 20.

in

in the *fifth*. "It is reported commonly (ſays the Apoſtle) "that there is fornica- "tion amongſt you; and ſuch fornication "that is not ſo much as named amongſt "the Gentiles, THAT ONE SHOULD HAVE "HIS FATHER'S WIFE [h]." The crime in queſtion therefore appears to be a MARRIAGE, on the principles of the Jewiſh Law, inceſtuous. SERM. IV.

And thus the objection, which ſtands on a ſuppoſition that St. Paul is ſpeaking of *concubinage*, in which the marriage-ceremony does not take place, nor conſequently the Magiſtrate interfere, comes to nothing. And let not the Apoſtle's calling it ſuch a ſpecies of fornication, *as was not named amongſt the Gentiles*, induce us to think it ſuch a Marriage as the Gentiles eſteemed illegal, and conſequently an union the civil Magiſtrate did not authorize, which would bring us round again to *concubinage*, from whence we ſet out: for by theſe words he only meant that it was diſreputable and ſcandalous amongſt them, not ſuch as was contrary to the Laws [i].

[h] 1 Cor. v. 1.

[i] "That the marrying of a Son in Law, and a

The

SERM. IV.

The *fornication* then in queſtion was a ſcandalous *marriage*. And being altogether unſuitable to a Chriſtian's profeſſion, we find [k] that the offender, on St. Paul's remonſtrance, took advantage of the Laws of divorce then in uſe, to ſhew his penitence.

All, therefore, we learn from this famous Caſe, is this general truth, corroborative of the foregoing argument, that where a pretended Marriage is ſolemnized in defiance of any Law, divine or human, which has a right to regulate the terms of the contract, it never was that union which God declares to be indiſſolvable, but one

" Mother in Law was not prohibited by the Laws " of the Roman Empire, may be ſeen in Tully: but " yet it was looked on as ſo ſcandalous and infamous " that it never had any countenance from practice. " His words, in his oration *pro Cluentio*, § 4. are ſo " agreeable to the preſent caſe that it may not be " amiſs to ſet them down. *Nubit Genero Socrus, nul-* " *lis auſpiciis, nullis auctoribus. O ſcelus incredibile, et,* " *præter hanc unam, in omni vita inauditum!*" LOCKE, on the place.

[k] See the ſecond Epiſtle to the Corinthians, chap. ii.

virtually

virtually void at the very making; and that the enacting it's diſſolution by a poſitive Law is only declarative of the Law of right reaſon and Religion concerning it. SERM. IV.

FINIS.

Books Printed for JOHN and PAUL KNAPTON in *Ludgate-Street*.

THE Principles of Natural and Revealed Religion occaſionally opened and explained, in a Courſe of Sermons, preached before the Honourable Society of *Lincoln's-Inn*, in two Volumes, 8vo. By the Reverend Dr. Warburton, Preacher to the Society.

The Alliance between Church and State; or, The Neceſſity and Equity of an Eſtabliſhed Religion and a Teſt Law demonſtrated. The third Edition, corrected and enlarged.

The Divine Legation of Moſes demonſtrated, 8vo.

JULIAN: or, A Diſcourſe concerning the EARTHQUAKE and FIERY ERUPTION which defeated that Emperor's Attempt to rebuild the Temple at *Jeruſalem*. In which the Reality of a divine Interpoſition is ſhewn; the Objections to it are anſwered; and the Nature of that Evidence which demands the Aſſent of every reaſonable Man to a miraculous Fact, is conſidered and explained. The ſecond Edition.

Remarks on ſeveral occaſional Reflections: In anſwer to the Rev. Dr. *Middleton*, Dr. *Pococke*, the Maſter of the *Charter-Houſe*, Dr. *Grey*, and others. Serving to explain and juſtify divers Paſſages in the Divine Legation, objected to by thoſe learned Writers. Part I. Price 2*s*. 6*d*.

Remarks on ſeveral occaſional Reflections, Part II. In anſwer to the Rev. Doctors *Stebbing* and *Sykes*. Serving to explain and juſtify the two Diſſertations in the Divine Legation, concerning the Command to *Abraham* to offer up his Son, and the Nature of the *Jewiſh* Theocracy, objected to by thoſe learned Writers. Price 2*s*. 6*d*.

An Apologetical Dedication to the Rev. Dr. *Stebbing*, in anſwer to his Cenſure and Miſrepreſentations of the Sermon preached on the Faſt-Day, *Dec*. 18, 1745. Price 4*d*.

Books Printed for J. and P. KNAPTON.

A Commentary on Mr. *Pope's* Eſſay on Man. Price 2*s*.

Theſe written by *W. WARBURTON*, D. D.

The Works of *Shakeſpear*, with a Comment, and Notes critical and explanatory, by Mr. *Pope* and Mr. *Warburton*. In 8 vol. 8vo.

The Works of *ALEXANDER POPE*, Eſq; In nine Volumes in large Octavo, complete. With his laſt Corrections, Additions, and Improvements, as they were delivered to the Editor a little before his Death: Together with the Commentaries and Notes of Mr. *Warburton*. Adorned with 24 Copper-Plates.

The ſame in nine Volumes in ſmall Octavo, complete, adorned with 24 Copper Plates.

An ESSAY on MAN, by *ALEXANDER POPE*, Eſq; enlarged and improved by the Author, with Notes by *W. Warburton*, D. D. Price 1*s*. 6*d*.

AN ESSAY ON MAN, and an *Eſſay on Criticiſm*, by *ALEXANDER POPE*, Eſq; with Commentaries and Notes by *W. Warburton*, D. D. In Quarto. Price 3*s*.

The DUNCIAD complete in Four Books, according to Mr. *POPE's* laſt Improvements. With ſeveral Additions now firſt printed, and the Diſſertations on the Poem and the Hero, and Notes Variorum. Publiſhed by Mr. *Warburton*. In Quarto. Price 4*s*.

The ſame 8vo. Price 2*s*.

Four ETHIC EPISTLES, by *ALEXANDER POPE*, Eſq; I. Of the Knowledge and Characters of Men. II. Of the Characters of Women. III. and IV. Of the Uſe of Riches. With the Commentaries and Notes of *W. Warburton*, D. D. In Quarto.

Mr. *POPE's* Letters in two Vol. in Folio.

Mr. *POPE's* Letters in two Vol. in Quarto.

Mr. *POPE's* Tranſlation of Homer's Odyſſey, in five Volumes, Quarto.